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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TASKS, SKILLS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

©

BY

WILFRED JOHN GREEN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1988

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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TASKS, SKILLS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Wilfred John Green

The purpose of the study was to investigate the role of superintendent of schools in Alberta with respect to the relative importance of, and relationships among, selected tasks, skills and personal characteristics.

Responses to a questionnaire developed for the study were received from superintendents, deputy superintendents, board chairmen, principals and Alberta Education managers. A total of 534 of the 648 questionnaires distributed were returned for a response rate of 82.4%. Interviews were used to collect supplementary information from a sample of twenty-nine respondents.

Both questionnaire and interview findings suggested that the most important tasks of a superintendent required work with trustees in areas such as participating in meetings of the entire board, establishing communication with trustees, and identifying priorities for policy development. In order of importance, the task areas were ranked as follows: 1) policy development, 2) evaluation, 3) working with trustees, 4) public relations, 5) managing staff, 6) business management, 7) school programs, 8) school facilities, 9) student services and 10) bus transportation.

Questionnaire respondents identified the three most important

skills in the overall work of a superintendent as making decisions, delegating responsibilities and being sensitive to feelings of others. The skills selected most frequently in relation to the ten task areas were delegating responsibilities, making decisions, organizing, analyzing information and synthesizing information.

The three most important personal characteristics in the overall work of a superintendent were trustworthiness, consistency and intelligence. These along with adaptability, approachability and caring were selected frequently as the most important personal characteristics in relation to the ten task areas.

A number of contingency variables were related to the expectations that were held for important tasks, skills and personal characteristics. Position held by respondent had the strongest relationship to expectations for the tasks, skills and characteristics of superintendents. Differences in expectations were also related to size and type of school jurisdiction but to a lesser extent than for position.

Questionnaire respondents identified the relative order of importance of the role elements examined to be skills first, characteristics second and tasks third. Interview respondents described leadership in the superintendency to be a preference for certain skills, characteristics and/or tasks, and to be influenced by contingency variables.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

List of Tables....xiv

List of Figures....xvi

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION....1

Statement of the Problem....2

Significance of the Study....2

Definition of Key Terms....3

Delimitations and Limitations....4

Organization of the Report....5

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK....6

Administrator Performance....6

Conceptual Framework....11

Role Variables....12

Expectations Variables....12

Contingency Variables....12

Interactions among the Variables....13

Research on School Superintendents....15

Research on Tasks....15

Skills and Characteristics Research....26

Tasks, Skills and Characteristics Research....29

Summary....36

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....37
Research Questions and Data Sources.....37
Questionnaires.....39
Development Strategies.....39
Drafting the questionnaire.....39
Validating the questionnaire.....43
Format of the questionnaire.....44
Questionnaire Sample.....45
Data Collection Techniques.....45
Rate of Return.....46
Interviews.....46
Development of an Interview Guide.....48
Interview Sample.....48
Conducting the Interviews.....49
Analysis of Questionnaire and Interview Data.....50
4. ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA.....52
Tasks of Superintendents.....52
Importance of Task Areas.....52
Most Important Tasks.....53
Least Important Tasks.....54
Influence of Contingency Variables on Task Expectations.....57
Position of respondents.....57
Size of school jurisdiction.....61
Type of school jurisdiction.....66
Skills of Superintendents.....70

Overall Skills Expectations.....70

Influence of Contingency Variables on Overall Skills Expectations.....70

Relationships of Skills and Task Areas.....77

Policy development.....77

Evaluation.....80

Working with trustees.....80

Public relations.....85

Managing staff.....85

Business management.....88

School programs.....93

School facilities.....93

Student services.....98

Transportation.....98

Summary.....102

Characteristics of Superintendents.....104

Overall Characteristics Expectations.....104

Influence of Contingency Variables on Overall Characteristics Expectations.....106

Relationships of Characteristics and Task Areas...108

Policy development.....111

Evaluation.....111

Working with trustees.....116

Public relations.....116

Managing staff.....121

Business management.....121

School programs.....126

School facilities....126
Student services....130
Transportation....130
Summary....130
General Importance of Skills, Characteristics and Tasks....137
Summary....138
5. ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA....141
Role Changes in the Superintendency....141
Leadership in the Superintendency....143
Expectations for a Superintendent Role....145
Incumbent Superintendent Expectations....145
Other Expectations....146
Trustees....146
Deputy and assistant superintendents....148
Secretary-treasurers....149
Principals....150
Teachers....151
Pressure groups....151
Provincial government....152
Background Variables....153
Situational Variables....154
Rural and Urban Differences....155
Size of School Jurisdiction....156
Number of Central Office Staff....157
Financial and Human Resources....157

Geography....158
Type of School Jurisdiction....159
Public and Separate Districts....160
Public Elected Boards....161
Media....161
Locally Appointed Superintendents....162
Reasons for Local Appointments....162
Problems in the Local Superintendency....162
Suggested Changes....164
Politics and the Superintendency....165
Superintendent of the Future....168
Future Oriented Leadership Role....169
Influences on the Leadership Role....170
Summary....172
6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS....174
Important Tasks....174
Important Skills....177
Important Characteristics....180
The Role of Superintendent....182
Environmental Influences....183
Expectations....184
Background Characteristics....186
Situational Influences....187
Size....187
Governance....188

Media.....190

Leadership and the Superintendency.....191

Summary.....193

7. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS.....196

Summary.....196

Findings.....198

Tasks.....198

Skills.....200

Characteristics.....200

Relative Importance of Skills, Characteristics and Tasks.....201

Other Contingencies.....201

Conclusions.....201

What Tasks are Important in the Work of Superintendents?.....202

What Skills are Important for Performing the Tasks of Superintendents?.....202

What Personal Characteristics are Important for Performing the Tasks of Superintendents?.....202

What is the Relative Importance of Tasks, Skills and Characteristics in the Work of Superintendents?.....203

How Do Contingency Variables Influence the Tasks, Skills and Personal Characteristics Considered Important in the Work of Superintendents?.....203

Implications.....204

Implications for Theory.....204

Implications for Practice.....205

Implications for Research.....208

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....210

APPENDIX A: SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE.....219

APPENDIX B: COVERING LETTERS AND POSTCARD.....232

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....236

APPENDIX D: RANKING OF TASKS.....239

APPENDIX E: POSITION COMPARISON OF TASKS IN EACH TASK AREA....244

APPENDIX F: SIZE OF SCHOOL JURISDICTION COMPARISON OF TASKS IN EACH TASK AREA.....250

APPENDIX G: TYPE OF SCHOOL JURISDICTION COMPARISON OF TASKS IN EACH TASK AREA.....256

VITA.....262

Tables

Table — Page

1. Questionnaire Returns by Respondent Subgroups.....47

2. Ranking of the Ten Most Important Tasks as Rated by Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Board Chairmen, Principals and Superintendents.....55

3. Ranking of the Ten Least Important Tasks as Rated by Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Board Chairmen, Principals and Superintendents.....56

4. Levels of Importance of Superintendent Tasks as Rated by the Sample of Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Board Chairmen, Principals and Superintendents.....240

5. Levels of Importance of Task Areas as Perceived by the Total Sample and Position Subgroups.....58

6. Levels of Importance of the Ten Most Important Tasks with Respondents Grouped According to Position.....60

7. Levels of Importance of Tasks in Each Task Area with Respondents Grouped According to Position.....245

8. Levels of Importance of Task Areas as Perceived by the Total Sample and Size of School Jurisdiction Subgroups.....62

9. Levels of Importance of the Ten Most Important Tasks with Respondents Grouped According to Size of School Jurisdiction.....65

10. Levels of Importance of Tasks in Each Task Area with Respondents Grouped According to Size of School Jurisdiction.....251

11. Levels of Importance of Task Areas as Perceived by the Total Sample and Type of School Jurisdiction Subgroups.....67

12. Levels of Importance of the Ten Most Important Tasks with Respondents Grouped According to Type of School Jurisdiction.....69

13. Levels of Importance of Tasks in Each Task Area with Respondents Grouped According to Type of School Jurisdiction.....257

Figures

Figure — Page

1. Interactions of Variables Related to the Role of Superintendent of Schools....14

2. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent....71

3. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent....74

4. Size of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent....75

5. Type of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent....76

6. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policies....78

7. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policies....79

8. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities....81

9. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities....82

10. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees....83

11. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees....84

12. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities.....86

13. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities.....87

14. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff....89

15. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff.....90

16. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities.....91

17. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities.....92

18. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs.....94

19. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs..95

20. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities.....96

21. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities.....97

22. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services.....99

23. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services..100

24. Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities.....101

25. Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities.....103

26. Total Sample Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent.....105

27. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent.....107

28. Size of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent.....109

29. Type of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent.....110

30. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policy.....112

31. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policies.....113

32. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities.....114

33. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities.....115

34. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees.....117

35. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees.....118

36. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities.....119

37. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities.....120

38. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff.....122

39. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff...123

40. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities.....124

41. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities.....125

42. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs.....127

43. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs.....128

44. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities.....129

45. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities.....131

46. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services.....132

47. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services.....133

48. Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities.....134

49. Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities.....135

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A superintendent is either the chief executive officer or the chief education officer in an Alberta school jurisdiction. By virtue of this position, a superintendent is ultimately responsible to the board for the education that is provided to students in the district. Superintendents have the responsibility to administer the school system in an effective and efficient manner and to provide leadership in the implementation of changes designed to improve educational programs. They are also expected to exercise sound judgement in performing their tasks and in coordinating the diverse tasks performed by others. Fulfilling these numerous and varied responsibilities probably involves the application of specialized skills and the possession of distinctive personal characteristics.

The results of past research in this area have made only a limited contribution to defining the superintendent role. Most research has taken the form of isolated studies of tasks, skills and/or characteristics. There has been very little emphasis on describing the interrelationships between the tasks and the people who perform the work of superintendents. A promising focus for research would seem to be defining what tasks, skills and personal characteristics are most important to the work of a superintendent and what skills and personal characteristics are important in different task areas.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of superintendent of schools with respect to the relative importance of and relationships among tasks, skills and personal characteristics. The specific research questions which guided the study were as follows:

1. What tasks are important in the work of superintendents?
2. What skills are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?
3. What personal characteristics are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?
4. What is the relative importance of tasks, skills and personal characteristics in the work of superintendents?
5. How do contingency variables influence the tasks, skills and personal characteristics considered important in the work of superintendents?

The investigation was conducted primarily through a questionnaire survey and interviews with persons knowledgeable about the role of the superintendent— Alberta Education managers, deputy superintendents, school board chairmen, principals and superintendents.

Significance of the Study

By considering the superintendency from the broader perspective of tasks, skills and personal characteristics, the present study was

designed to extend the research and theory on the role of the superintendent of schools. The most recent role study of the Alberta superintendent was conducted by Downey in 1976. The intent of the present study was to extend the past research in this area by determining not only which aspects of the role are considered important but also which skills and personal characteristics are associated with various task areas. An inventory of important tasks, skills and personal characteristics has the potential for contributing to a better understanding of the superintendency. Identification of generally agreed upon tasks, skills and personal characteristics could also lead to a more complete conceptualization of the superintendency.

A clearly defined superintendent role could be particularly relevant to school boards and superintendents. Tasks, skills and characteristics identified in this study could be utilized as criteria in hiring superintendents, in creating role descriptions for superintendents and in developing evaluation instruments and procedures. Insights into the demands of the role may also provide guidance to universities in the development and modification of graduate programs in educational administration. Research-based criteria could also inform discussions about issues such as testing and certification of school superintendents.

Definition of Key Terms

In this study, the role of superintendent of schools was conceptualized as consisting of tasks, skills and personal

characteristics. These terms needed to be defined as they applied to this research project.

Tasks are elements of work that are assigned to or undertaken by superintendents. For example, two of the fifty-eight tasks investigated in this study were: "identifying priorities for policy development" and "participating in evaluation of principals." The tasks were classified under ten task areas. For example, the first task identified above was classified under the Policy Development task area and the second was classified under the Evaluation task area.

Skills are the abilities or competencies that enable superintendents to perform their tasks. "Delegating responsibilities" and "relating to others" are two of eighteen skills that were included in this study.

Personal characteristics are the inherited and learned qualities, traits or properties that make each person an unique individual. "Trustworthiness" and "intelligence" are two examples of fifteen superintendent personal characteristics that were investigated in this study.

Tasks, skills and characteristics defined the role of superintendent of schools. The researcher used the above definitions of these key terms as working definitions throughout the course of the study.

Delimitations and Limitations

The project was delimited by the researcher in the following

manner:

1. This research was a study of locally appointed Alberta superintendents of schools.
2. Data were collected by means of the School Superintendent Study Questionnaire and by means of interviews.
3. The study sample included Alberta Education managers, deputy and assistant superintendents, school board chairmen, principals and superintendents of schools.
4. To be included in the sample, the individuals had to be actively involved in the field of education in Alberta at the time of data collection.

A limitation of the study was the researcher's assumption that perceptions of respondents were accurate and reflected reality. Secondly, the study has doubtful generalizability to other contexts and to other time periods.

Organization of the Report

An introduction to the study has been presented in this chapter. Chapter 2 provides a framework for the study through a review of literature and presentation of a conceptual framework. In Chapter 3, the research design and methodology employed in conducting the study are discussed. Chapters 4 and 5 are devoted to an analysis of the questionnaire and interview data. A discussion of the results of the analysis is presented in Chapter 6. In the final chapter, Chapter 7, a summary, the conclusions and several implications of the study are provided.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The review of literature is both general and specific. First, an overview of theory and research on administrator performance is presented. A conceptual framework for the study, based upon this literature, is then developed. The chapter concludes with a review of research on superintendents which has been conducted in Canada and the United States.

Administrator Performance

A historical overview of theory and research relating to administrator performance, particularly role theory, serves as the base for the present study. Concepts from role theory have been utilized as a theoretical framework for research on organizations and administration for many years. Biddle (1966) provides a summary listing ninety-nine researchers who have contributed to role theory from the 1930s through to the 1960s. Biddle's book, Role Theory: Concepts and Research, also provides a detailed description of role theory concepts. Owens (1981), in a more recent text entitled Organizational Behavior in Education, devotes part of a chapter to a discussion of role theory

concepts.

Role theory concepts relevant to this study include role, position, person and expectations. Role performance relates to behavior that occurs as a result of interactions among people. Behavior is a function of position and person. Position refers to location in the social structure of persons under consideration, which in this study were superintendents of schools; person refers to the individual and the unique skills and personal characteristics which he or she brings to the job. Expectations are standards or criteria that people look forward to or expect.

A social systems orientation provided a second theoretical underpinning for the study. Social system proponents theorize that administrators work in social systems. A social systems framework that has been utilized in many studies is the Getzels-Guba (1957) model. According to this model, administrator behavior can be described along two dimensions: an institutional dimension in which the organization defines roles for an administrator and a personal dimension which reflects the personality and needs-dispositions of the administrator. The interaction of personal needs and organizational expectations determines administrator behavior. As Owens (1981: 83) points out,

> social systems theory, such as the Getzels-Guba model, has provided a useful way of conceptualizing behavior as a function of the interaction between the demands of organizational requirements and the needs dispositions of individuals in the organization.

Since the 1960s the influence of the Getzels-Guba model has been apparent in administrator theory and research. Based on a study of principals in fifty-six Alberta schools, Miklos (1963: 1) stated that

"it is fairly evident that the behavior of an individual is influenced not only by the actual expectations held for him, but also by his own perceptions of those expectations." The concern for organization member expectations and incumbent administrator expectations is also evident in studies of leader behavior of school superintendents. Halpin (1966: 86) identified and defined two dimensions of leader behavior:

> 1. Initiating structure refers to the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and the members of his work group, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure.
>
> 2. Consideration refers to behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and the members of his staff.

The third area of theorizing that was applied in this study is contingency theory. Contingency theorists focus on the extent to which administrator behavior is affected by contingencies. For example, Fiedler (1967) used concepts of person-related and situational variables to formulate a theory of leader performance. To assess person-related variables, specifically the motivation of the leader, Fiedler developed the "Least Preferred Co-Worker Scale." Two leadership styles emerged: leaders could be either relationship-oriented or task-oriented. According to Fiedler's theorizing, the favorableness of the situation to the leader in terms of 1) the position power of the leader, 2) the relative structure of the task and 3) leader-member relations determines the most effective leader style.

Reddin's (1970) model is a second example that illustrates a concern for contingency factors. According to this model, the four

leadership styles of 1) low task and low relationships, 2) low task and high relationships, 3) high task and low relationships and 4) high task and high relationships are affected by five situational factors: 1) climate of the organization, 2) work technology, 3) relationships with superiors, 4) relationships with co-workers and 5) relationships with subordinates.

Researchers in the 1980s continued to utilize the models developed in the 1960s. Musella (1982) conducted a cross-Canada survey of school principals where he asked respondents to identify, from an extensive list, skills, characteristics and areas of knowledge that are most important to principal success. The three most important skills were negotiation, decision-making and organization, and the three most important characteristics were dependability, sincerity and consistency. The three most important areas of knowledge were curriculum/program evaluation, board policy and student evaluation.

Three recent research projects in the field of business investigated person-related variables. Bennis (1984) was involved in a five year research project in which he interviewed ninety of the most effective and successful leaders from corporations and from the public sector. The study revealed that each of the executives displayed human relations skills in four areas:

1. management of attention, or articulating a vision which attracted people to them;
2, management of meaning, or being able to communicate with others;
3. management of trust, or reflecting reliability, so that

people know where the executive is coming from and what he stands for; and,

4. management of self, or knowing one's skills and displaying them successfully.

In another study, Luce (1984) identified setting an example, communicating effectively, and being accessible as three criteria of effective leaders. These findings were based on interviews with thirteen chief executives from major Canadian businesses and Crown corporations.

A third study was concluded in six corporations and involved twelve division heads. Isenberg (1984) conducted indepth interviews, observed executives on the job, read documents and talked with the executive's colleagues. He discovered that effective executives think more often— think how to do things, think while doing things, think about organizational processes, think about interpersonal processes and people they come in contact with, and think to maintain and sharpen intellectual skills. These divison heads also tolerated ambiguity and inconsistencies, and perceived and understood novelty.

Administrator performance research and theory development from the 1960s to the present seems to be concerned with three major categories of variables: 1) position-related variables pertaining to tasks and processes, 2) person-related variables pertaining to skills and characteristics and 3) contingency variables.

A common thread extending from the 1960s and receiving a renewed emphasis in the 1980s is the investigation of person-related variables. There has been a continuing interest in leader characteristics. Bass

(1981) in Stodgill's Handbook of Leadership presents a review of 124 trait studies undertaken from 1904 to 1948, and a second review of 163 studies of leader characteristics completed between 1948 and 1970. Bass makes an important point when he says that characteristics should not be considered in isolation, since they are now seen as interacting with situational variables. This view adds support for including person-related variables, contingency variables and position-related variables in combination in the same study.

Conceptual Framework

Theories of role, social systems and contingencies were utilized as an organizing framework for the study. Role theory was considered to be basic, since the study was concerned with role performance. The concepts considered in this study were skills, characteristics and tasks. The study was also based in social systems theory, since the above variables were considered to be in a state of interaction. Perceptions of people in the organization, of people outside the organization and of incumbent superintendents were viewed as interacting to determine the role of superintendent of schools. Interactions among people are considered to be affected by their background characteristics, and by the situation in which these people are located. Contingency variables were assumed to be another set of variables important to consider in a study of the superintendent. A more detailed consideration of each of the variable groups should add further clarity to the proposed conceptual framework.

Role Variables

The role variables classification depicts the three major components of any job as being tasks, skills and characteristics. The role of superintendent of schools is considered to consist of both position-related variables or tasks, and person-related variables or skills and characteristics.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive and Affective Domains was the organizing framework for classifying skills and personal characteristics. The person-related variables that fitted into the Cognitive Domain were classified as skills and the variables that fitted into the Affective Domain were classified as personal characteristics.

Expectations Variables

The study investigated expectations that people have for the role of superintendent of schools. Perceptions were gathered from Alberta Education managers, deputy superintendents, board chairmen, principals and superintendents.

Contingency Variables

Background characteristics of the incumbent superintendent and other persons are believed to affect expectations for superintendent performance. This study investigated the following background characteristics: position of respondents and years of experience of respondents. A second area of contingencies were situation variables.

In this study, situational variables included size and type of school system.

Interactions among the Variables

The above variables are considered to be in a state of interaction as is represented in Figure 1. The role of superintendent of schools can be defined in terms of tasks, skills and characteristics. The framework is premised on the assumption that the role of superintendent consists of a number of predetermined tasks and that there are expectations for the person who will occupy the role in relation to preferred skills and characteristics.

The expectations for tasks, skills and characteristics are held by people in the environment. Each incumbent superintendent also has expectations for the role of superintendent, and brings particular skills and characteristics to the job. The interaction of personal skills and characteristics with task requirements of and expectations for the role contributes to defining the role of superintendent of schools.

People are affected by environmental contingencies. One category of contingencies is classified as background characteristics. Situational variables, or the environment that people work in, are a second category of contingencies.

In summary, the role of superintendent of schools consists of an interaction of tasks, skills and characteristics. The role is dependent upon the environment: expectations of people, background characteristics and situational variables.

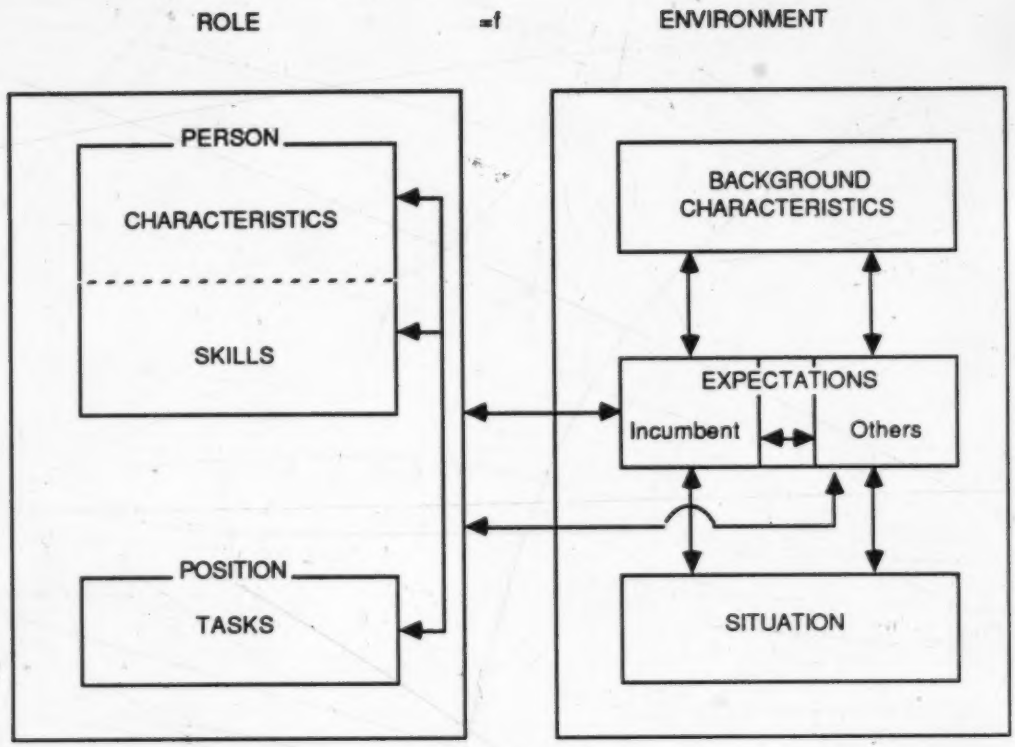

Figure 1

Interactions of Variables Related to the Role of Superintendent of Schools

Research on School Superintendents

A review of research on superintendents provided a further base for the study. An extensive literature search revealed that only seven studies have been conducted since 1958 which investigated role variables of Canadian superintendents. In an attempt to locate additional role studies, the entries in Dissertation Abstracts were reviewed for a ten year period, 1975 to 1985. As a result, thirty-eight studies that pertained to American superintendents were located. These forty-five studies of Canadian and American superintendents are reviewed in this section in terms of findings related to tasks, skills and characteristics of school superintendents.

Research on Tasks

Four Canadian studies have focused on tasks of school superintendents. A major study was conducted by Collins at the University of Alberta in 1958. Questionnaires were sent to 223 superintendents in British Columbia, Alberta, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia. A total of seventy-eight superintendents from across Canada, who were attending a course, were also interviewed to determine relationships between real and ideal roles for the superintendent. Instruction was found to be the most important task area and included tasks pertaining to classroom instruction procedures, methods and techniques, teacher evaluation, inservice education, and pupil progress and promotion. The Management task area was found to be

second in importance; tasks pertaining to instructional management, personnel management and business management (policy planning and policy execution) were classified into this task area. The School-Community Relations task area rated third in importance. The respondents commented that superintendents worked on the majority of tasks in the above task areas.

The next Canadian superintendency study was also a University of Alberta study. Ready (1961) surveyed Saskatchewan superintendents, chairmen, and selected Saskatchewan department of education officials. There was general agreement among those surveyed in regard to the following ranked task areas: 1) Instructional Leadership, 2) Staff Personnel, 3) Pupil Personnel, 4) School-Community Leadership, 5) Organization and Structure, and 6) Tasks as a Field Officer of the Department of Education. There was also disagreement among superintendents and other respondent groups concerning the importance of some tasks in Staff Personnel, School Plant, and School Finance task areas.

A third University of Alberta study of superintendent tasks was the Sherk study of 1964. Sherk conducted his study of 180 Alberta principals in twenty-one divisions and counties. The task areas under investigation included: Instructional Leadership, Selection and Management of Staff Personnel, Pupil Personnel, School-Community Leadership, Provision and Maintenance of School Facilities, and Bus Transportation. Sherk found that there were wide variations in expectations of principals for the role of the provincially appointed superintendent of schools in the above task areas.

The next study of Canadian superintendents originated in Pennsylvania. Fast (1968) involved a sample of principals and board members from thirty-one Alberta and thirty-one Pennsylvania school jurisdictions in a study of superintendents' tasks. The thirty-seven item questionnaire consisted of questions pertaining to the most important tasks of school superintendents as revealed by previous research and experience. These tasks were classified into the following nine dimensions or task areas of superintendent performance: Instructional Leadership, Curriculum, Staff Personnel, Administration, Pupil Administration, Financial Administration, School Plant and Business Management, Public Relations, Administrative Structure and Organization, and General Planning. Fast found that there were significant differences between principals' and board members' expectations of the superintendent role. The researcher also revealed that board members' ratings were higher than principals' ratings for all task areas. A conclusion of the study was that principals and board members held conflicting expectations for superintendents. Results of the study also confirmed that a superintendent's behavior is influenced by his own expectations and by others' expectations.

Ten other doctoral studies have utilized the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire developed by Fast. A chronological review of these studies follows.

In 1975 Casburn mailed questionnaires to each superintendent and board president in 149 Texas school districts. The major finding of the study was that presidents perceived the role of superintendents differently than did the superintendent respondents. The greatest

differences in perceptions between superintendents and board presidents were in the task areas of Financial Administration and Staff Personnel Administration, whereas the strongest areas of similarities in perceptions were in the areas of Pupil Personnel Administration, Curriculum, and General Planning. Background characteristics of age and experience of respondents were found not to be related to the differences in expectations. Situational variables of size, wealth, and setting of the school district were also found not to be related to expectations of the superintendent role.

In another study of Texas school superintendents, Lilley (1975) used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire with school board presidents and superintendents from 210 independent school districts. The purpose of the study was to determine if differences found were related to characteristic properties of either superintendents, board presidents or school districts. Significant differences were found between roles of the superintendent as perceived by superintendents and board presidents, but differences in expectations were not related to characteristic properties of the two respondent groups or to school districts. Differences correlated with only one characteristic, namely, the board president's age.

Texas school board presidents and superintendents were involved in yet another study in which McBride (1976) utilized the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire in 587 independent school districts. Results indicated that there was variance in the superintendent's role in the task area of Curriculum as perceived by superintendents and board presidents. The researcher concluded that there was a lack of agreement

in all task areas except Finance.

In a further study of the Texas superintendency, Winkler (1976) used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire to determine the role of the superintendent in Texas as perceived by superintendents and school board presidents. The Questionnaire was utilized with 513 matched pairs of Texas superintendents and board presidents. The major finding was that the superintendent role was perceived differently by superintendents and board presidents for twenty-five of thirty-seven task statements on the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire. Assorted background variables did not produce significant differences.

Smith (1979) used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire to investigate the role of superintendents in the State of Mississippi. Questionnaire data were collected from sixty-seven superintendents and sixty-seven board of education chairmen. Smith found that there were no significant differences in expectations of superintendents and chairmen regarding the role of superintendent; similarities were noted in all nine dimensions of the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire. An investigation of background variables of age, educational level and years of experience as superintendent or chairman, did not result in any significant differences. The situational variable of district size, likewise produced no significant differences in results.

In 1980 Francom used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire and interviews to study the role of the population of forty superintendents in the State of Utah. The researcher concluded that superintendents had a positive perception of their role and a positive relationship with local boards of education. There were no significant differences in how

superintendents in different-sized school districts perceived their role.

Dodson (1981) used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire with 153 superintendents, 304 principals and 304 board members to investigate the role of the superintendent in the State of Mississippi. The principal subgroup of respondents was found to perceive the role of superintendent differently than did the superintendent subgroup of respondents. Board members' ratings were higher than superintendents' ratings on all nine task areas. Background variables, relating to age, sex, race, years of experience and educational level of respondents, did not produce patterns of difference in the results.

The Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire was also used in a Louisiana study of the ideal and actual leadership roles of superintendents. Phillips (1981) surveyed school board presidents in sixty-six public school systems and concluded that superintendents and board presidents saw a strong relationship between real and ideal superintendent leadership roles. The researcher noted that there was no relationship between superintendents' and presidents' expectations of the superintendent ideal leadership role. For the actual leadership role, the superintendent group and the president group did not agree on seven of nine task areas; Instructional Leadership, Curriculum, Staff, Personnel Administration, Pupil Personnel Administration, Financial Administration, Public Relations, and General Planning. The respondents agreed on the superintendent's actual leadership role in two task areas of School Plant and Business Management, and Administrative Structure and Organization.

In 1982 Noble used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire to study the role of superintendents in the State of Mississippi. Thirty-nine superintendents and thirty-nine board of education chairmen provided their perceptions regarding the importance of various tasks to the superintendency. Similarities in expectations of superintendents and chairmen were noted in all nine dimensions of the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire.

Baker (1983) used the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire to investigate the role of superintendents in the State of Colorado. A superintendent, school board member, high school principal, high school teacher, elementary principal and elementary teacher from each of 177 school districts were the sample for the study. Significant differences in expectations of the superintendent subgroup and at least one other subgroup were found for the following five task areas: Staff Personnel Administration, Financial Administration, School Plant and Business Management, Public Relations, and Administrative Structure and Organization. The situational variable of school district size was related to the importance a reference group attached to six task areas: Instructional Leadership, Curriculum, Pupil Personnel Administration, School Plant and Business Management, Public Relations, and Administrative Structure and Organization.

In summary, the ten studies that utilized the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire as a research instrument all used superintendents as respondents. Nine included board chairmen or board members as respondents, two included principals and one study included teachers as respondents. Findings in seven of the studies pointed to

differences in expectations for the role of superintendent among the respondent subgroups, and one study noted similarities between superintendent and chairmen respondents. As far as background variables were concerned, there were no significant differences in comparisons involving age, experience, sex and educational level of respondents in most of the studies. In only one study was age of the board presidents identified as a factor affecting the perceived role of a superintendent. The situational variable of size of school district was found to be a significant variable in one study.

In fourteen other studies, tasks of superintendents were investigated by means of questionnaires other than the Superintendent Behavior Questionnaire. A chronological review of these studies follows.

In 1975 Douglas investigated competencies necessary for public school superintendents as perceived by seventy-five practicing Texas school superintendents. These respondents identified ninety-eight competencies which they considered necessary for success. Tasks in curriculum and instruction were considered to be least important. The background variable of experience, and the situational variable of size of school district, were the two variables that were found to be associated with responses regarding the role of superintendent.

In another 1975 study, Smith investigated the role of Iowa superintendents by mailing questionnaires to one hundred superintendents and school board chairmen. The main finding of the study was that there were differences in the way chairmen and superintendents perceived the superintendent role. Superintendents gave

significantly higher importance to the following tasks: directs important board decisions, responds to public demands for reform, establishes administrative teamwork, advises board on important decisions and policies, recommends dismissal of ineffective personnel, and facilitates cooperative decision-making.

A third 1975 study was conducted by Kumagai who surveyed California county and district superintendents, county and district school boards, and state legislators. There were significant differences as to the role of county superintendents among the respondent groups.

There was one 1976 study of superintendent tasks conducted by Smith who developed a questionnaire to study school superintendents in Nebraska. A total of 637 superintendents, teachers and trustees participated in the study. The researcher found that there were significant differences in expectations among superintendents, teachers and trustees. The background variable of age of respondents was not found to affect perceptions, while the situational variable of district size produced significant differences in perceptions.

The one 1977 superintendent study of tasks was Vogt's study. He included superintendents, chairmen and other central office administrators from eighty-three districts in New York State in a study of superintendents. This study found that superintendents and other district administrators agreed on the perceived role of school superintendents, and that there were no significant differences in expectations of chairmen and superintendents.

There were two 1979 studies of superintendent task orientations.

Behner (1979) studied superintendents in Ohio in a questionnaire study involving fifty Ohio superintendents and board presidents, and forty-five educational administration professors. Significant differences in expectations were found between superintendents and board presidents.

Bosley (1979) involved a sample of 1010 superintendents and board presidents from Pennsylvania in a study of superintendent roles. Significant differences were noted among the two respondent groups for sixty-three of one hundred tested perceptions.

Four 1980 studies of superintendent tasks were located. Bart (1980) surveyed superintendents and school board members from sixty-five Arizona school districts. Superintendents' and board members' expectations differed significantly on the following task areas: Personnel Administration, Curriculum Development, Teaching Materials, Finance and Budget, and Public Relations. The widest disagreement was between rural board members and rural superintendents regarding the role of superintendents.

In a second 1980 study, Kinn sent questionnaires to superintendents and board members in one hundred Minnesota school districts. Kinn concluded that there was a lack of consensus between superintendents and board members regarding the role of superintendent. The researcher commented that the board member subgroup generally assigned superintendents more responsibility than did the superintendent subgroup.

A third 1980 study was conducted by Lepley. He sent a questionnaire to 112 Iowa superintendents and asked them to rate the

importance of thirty-two tasks. A ranking of tasks revealed that people and finance tasks were more important than other tasks. Contingency variables of years of experience and size of school district influenced superintendents' perceptions of certain tasks.

In a fourth 1980 task study of superintendents, Worthington sent questionnaires to superintendents and board members in one hundred school districts in Kentucky. Worthington found that there were significant differences in mean ratings between superintendents and board members for twenty-four of fifty-five items. Contingency variables pertaining to number of years of experience and educational level of respondents, as well as size of districts, were not related to the expectations of the superintendent role. Worthington concluded that the position of the respondents was the variable that determined expectations of the superintendent role, and that superintendents and board members viewed the role differently.

There were two 1981 superintendent task studies. Jacobson (1981) studied the superintendency in Illinois by having seventy-eight superintendents rank the ten most important tasks of a superintendent from a list of thirty-four tasks. A sample of board members and teachers were then asked to rate superintendent performance in each of the top ten responsibility areas. Board members and superintendents were in closer agreement than teachers in the ratings of importance of the ten task areas. Furthermore, teachers rated superintendents significantly lower than either superintendents or board members.

Ross (1981) used questionnaire responses from a sample of superintendents, central office administrators, principals and school

board members to study the superintendency in Pennsylvania. The main result reported in the study was an overall ranking of the task areas, which, from most important to least important, was: Staff Personnel Management, School Board Relations, Instructional Roles, Fiscal Affairs, School-Community Relations, Report Preparation/Record Keeping, School Plant Management, Professional Development, Curriculum, School District Relations and Support Services.

In a more recent study, Johnson (1983) surveyed superintendents and school board members in 263 small school districts in California. He found that there were significant differences in expectations between superintendents and school board members in task areas related to Pupil Personnel, Staff Personnel and Financial Administration.

To summarize, superintendents were respondents in all fourteen of the above studies. Board presidents or board members responded in twelve studies, central office administrators responded in two studies, and principals, professors and state legislators each were respondents in one study. Position of respondents was associated with expectations; differences among respondent groups were noted in ten studies. The background variables of age and experience each was related to expectations in one study while the situational variable of size of school district was associated with expectations in three studies.

Skills and Characteristics Research

Two studies have investigated person profiles of Canadian superintendents. Sampson (1965) used a lengthy questionnaire with 464 superintendents as well as interviews to study the conditions of

employment of provincially employed superintendents in English speaking provinces of Canada. The interview respondents identified skills and characteristics requirements for superintendents. Respondents said that superintendents needed certain skills or abilities: to get along with people, to communicate, to command respect and to organize. Desirable characteristics included good appearance, moral courage, sound judgement, sense of humor, and confidence.

In a second study of Canadian superintendents, Campbell (1969) circulated a questionnaire to fifty-eight superintendents and fifty-eight board chairmen in school divisions and counties to investigate expectations for required competencies of the provincial school superintendent. Campbell defined competencies as skills, attitudes, understandings and knowledges superintendents needed to perform tasks. There were significant differences between Chairmen and Superintendent subgroups for six of fifty suggested competencies. Chairmen and Superintendents agreed on twenty competencies required by superintendents that consisted of six attitudes, eight skills and six knowledges. The skills pertinent to this study include: getting people to work harmoniously, leading group discussions, getting and using expert opinion, arousing interest and stimulating, working with community members, cooperating with teachers and school personnel, and gathering information and evaluating performance. Campbell noted that there was a tendency for respondents to rank higher competencies that related to human behavior than technical competencies requiring specific knowledge.

Four research studies were concerned with person profiles of

American school superintendents. Wooten (1983) used a questionnaire with a sample of South Carolina superintendents to identify desirable personal characteristics and skills for superintendents. Wooten found that superintendents were persistent in pursuing goals, were assertive leaders, communicated well, possessed a great deal of self-respect and were not easily manipulated. He concluded that, "superintendents generally have ambition, persistence, courage, faith, integrity, creativity, a sense of justice, objectivity, flexibility, self-discipline, decisiveness, skill in dealing with people, and emotional maturity" (1983: 1290-A).

Krepps (1982) utilized questionnaires to study a sample of 104 Pennsylvania superintendents. Significant relationships were found between Hall's "Styles of Management Inventory" and Cattell's "Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire." Superintendent management style correlated with six of sixteen personality trait categories: outgoing, emotionally stable, apprehensive, tough-minded, self-sufficient and suspicious.

A third study of American superintendents involved a comparison of personality profiles of female superintendents with females aspiring to superintendencies. Data for this Ohio study were obtained by a questionnaire and psychological inventory from a sample of forty women. Scally (1982) found that female superintendents and those aspiring to be superintendents exhibited similar characteristics, except female superintendents had stronger tendencies for the following characteristics: to be domineering, sense of well-being, self-control, need for achievement, ability to internalize and appreciate structures

and organizations.

In the fourth profile study of American superintendents, Schmitz (1982) surveyed eighty Iowa school board presidents concerning their perceptions of importance of twenty-five job competencies and characteristics. The ability to communicate ideas to the board, staff and community was selected as the most important competency. The ability to interpret, review and revise school policy, and to have an interest in the continuation of professional growth were considered to be two other important competencies.

To summarize the findings of the above six studies, the most important skills related to getting along with people, to communicating, and to information skills. Each of these skills was mentioned in three studies. As far as personal characteristics were concerned, a number were identified but the findings did not suggest a common list.

Tasks, Skills and Characteristics Research

Only one Canadian study investigated tasks, skills and characteristics variables. In 1976 an extensive study of the locally appointed Alberta school superintendent was conducted by L. W. Downey Research Associates in cooperation with the University of Alberta. Questionnaires were sent to all Alberta superintendents, secretary-treasurers and board members, some central office staff, and a sample of principals and teachers. Interviews and observations were utilized in the site visits of seven school jurisdictions. Special interviews were conducted with a sample of superintendents who had left

the superintendency as well as with Alberta Education officials and regional office staff. In addition, a special analysis of a Local Education Authority in England was conducted to provide background to examine the Alberta county system of governance.

Respondents rated the degree to which superintendents should perform certain tasks. When the tasks were analyzed according to task areas, the following priority ordering emerged: Educational Leadership, Personnel Management, Executive Officer Functions, Public Relations, Pupil Personnel, Physical Facilities, and Business and Finance. A comment of the researchers regarding the task areas was that:

> Most respondents believed that the superintendent carried out all of these functions— except Business and Finance. The majority of board chairmen and secretary-treasurers, however did not believe he carried out the Physical Facilities function (1976: 16).

Questionnaire respondents were also asked to rate the levels of importance of ten skills, that were listed as abilities to

1. initiate change;
2. mediate and resolve conflicts and disturbances;
3. establish and maintain effective relationships with colleagues;
4. create communication networks;
5. isolate a problem, to conceive of alternative solutions, to anticipate consequences and to make judgements;
6. obtain for education its fair share of society's resources;
7. allocate resources efficiently;
8. take reasonable risks and implement innovation;
9. articulate the case of the education professions to the community; and
10. maintain the general support of the community and to deal with special interest groups.

Respondents identified the ability to initiate change as the most important skill and the ability to solve problems as the second most important skill.

In the interviews with superintendents, assistant superintendents, trustees, secretary-treasurers, principals and teachers, a number of other desirable skills and charcteristics were identified:

1. The superintendent needs to be politically astute.
2. The superintendent must be able to communicate effectively.
3. The superintendent must have a strong personality.
4. The superintendent must be a good organizer.
5. The superintendent must be able to mediate conflict.
6. The superintendent should be able to relate to, and work with all segments of the educational community: be compatible, be diplomatic, be honest, be open, be visible.
7. The superintendent has to be a good manipulator to survive.

A conclusion of the study was that there were conflicting expectations of colleagues and of trustees regarding the role of superintendent. In addition to a position occupied by the respondents comparison, the researchers also studied situational variables and found that the move from provincial to local superintendent appointments had affected the superintendency. The report stated:

> Over the past five years the Alberta superintendent has changed from "the government's man" to "the board's man." The change has provided more jolts to the person of the superintendent than most people realize: he has moved from the relative security of the public service to the comparative insecurity of local employment (1976: 23).

Type of school jurisdiction was also found to be important. The county superintendency was identified as a special case with the researchers concluding that

(1) the County Act is ambiguous; (2) the county system denies

> complete representation in educational policy-making; and (3) the county system creates confusion over the role and administrative functioning of the school superintendent (1976: 26).

Seven American studies have integrated the study of tasks, skills and characteristics. This section presents a chronological review of research where both tasks, and skills and/or characteristics were investigated in the same study.

Sanford (1976) studied the North Dakota superintendency by involving seventy-five superintendents and seventy-five board presidents in a questionnaire survey of expectations for tasks and characteristics of superintendents. The Finance, and Personnel task areas were ranked first and second, while the least important task areas were Plant, which was ranked seventh, and Support Services, which was ranked eighth. There were differences in the rankings between subgroups; Public Relations, and School Board Relationships were ranked significantly higher by the Superintendent subgroup, and Curriculum and Instruction, and Negotiations were ranked significantly higher by the Board Presidents subgroup. A composite ranking of personal characteristics produced the following results, listed in order from first to sixth: personality, intellectual ability, task-oriented characteristics, social characteristics, social background and physical characteristics.

McLaughlin (1977) interviewed sixty individuals including superintendents, board members, teachers and parents from eight California counties. Each respondent subgroup selected a different task area as a primary responsibility area for superintendents. The

Superintendent subgroup selected School Board Relations as the most important task area, the Board Member subgroup selected School Finance as the most important task area, and the Teacher and Parent subgroups selected the Instructional Program as the most important task area. There was agreement among the four subgroups that the two most important characteristics were leadership and honesty. The researcher concluded that superintendents, board members, teachers and parents had different expectations regarding which five task areas and characteristics were most important for small district superintendents.

In another 1977 study, Vigil involved 181 board presidents in a questionnaire study of the superintendency in Colorado. Vigil found that the presidents agreed on three administrative behaviors for superintendents. First in importance were human relations skills; second in importance were general knowledge and skills concerning the administration of the total school program; and third in importance were understandings and skills of subject areas. The researcher commented that the presidents placed very little importance on superintendent creativity.

Two years later, Matherly (1979) conducted a Delphi study of 136 California superintendents. A frequency count of items submitted by respondents for the first mailout produced the following ranked job categories: Personnel Management, Finance, Curriculum, Public Relations, Other, Personnel Evaluation, Planning, School Law, Human Relations, School Board Relations, and Non-Personnel Evaluation. After three mailouts, three criteria emerged as essential superintendent competencies. First in importance was maintaining effective board

relations, second in importance was the ability to care and third in importance was establishing effective employer/employee relations.

Also in 1979, Russe[illegible] investigated competency requirements of Oregon superintendents, in a study where superintendents responded to questionnaires and interviews. Personnel management, and human relations and school board relations emerged as the top two competency requirements for school superintendents.

Tippet (1981) studied tasks, skills and characteristics of Virginia superintendents. Superintendents and board members were asked to list, in order of importance, content skill areas and personal characteristics of superintendents. The ranking of the task areas from most to least important was as follows:

Supt.	Bd. Member	Task Area
1	2	School Finance
2	4	Superintendent-Board Relations
3	3	Personnel Management
4	6	Public Relations
5	5	Accomplishment of Goals
6	1	Curriculum Development
7	7	Policy Formulation
8	8	School Construction

The ranking of personal skills and characteristics was as follows:

Supt.	Bd. Member	Skills/Characteristics
1	1	Leadership Skills
2	2	Organization Skills
3	4	Communication Skills

4	3	Fairness
5	5	Good Listener
6	6	Loyalty
7	7	Political Ability

The contingencies of educational level and experience of board members were found to affect their expectations regarding the superintendent's role.

Cunningham and Hentges (1982) conducted an extensive study of the American superintendency which involved a survey sample of 2533 superintendents from across the United States. A total of 1339 questionnaires were returned for a 57.1% return. The superintendent respondents indicated that board member expectations of superintendents were highest in the following task areas: Finance, Internal Management, Public Relations, Planning, and Curriculum Development. The respondents revealed that superintendent skills were being emphasized, namely, abilities in general management, human relations, data management, technology, finance, change, conflict resolution, politics and research. The study acknowledged that personal characteristics were also of prime importance, particularly in hiring and evaluation of superintendents, but this study did not define what the important characteristics were.

In summary, the superintendent task area that was emphasized the most in the Canadian study and in three American studies was Personnel. Finance was reported to be an important task area in four of the American studies. In the skills category, human relations skills were reported to be important in the Canadian study as well as in four

American studies. As far as personal characteristics were concerned, honesty was mentioned in two studies, while intelligent, caring and fair were each mentioned in one study.

Summary

This study was grounded in role theory, systems theory and contingency theory. The conceptual framework for the study portrays a superintendent role as consisting of interacting tasks, skills and characteristics. People's expectations for the role are assumed to be affected by their background characteristics and situational variables.

The review of literature revealed that most superintendency research has focused on tasks and that limited work has been done researching skills and characteristics. The research findings pointed out some important task areas, skills and charcteristics, and revealed that people's expectations were related to various contingency variables.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology of the study in terms of instrument development, sample selection, data collection and data analysis.

Research Questions and Data Sources

On the basis of the conceptual framework and the literature reviewed, the following research questions were formulated to guide the collection and analysis of data:

1. What tasks are important in the work of superintendents?
   - 1.1 What are the perceived levels of importance of various task areas to the superintendency?
   - 1.2 What are the most important tasks of superintendents?
   - 1.3 What tasks are least important in the work of a superintendent?
2. What skills are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?
   - 2.1 What skills are most important in the overall work of a superintendent?
   - 2.2 What specific skills are perceived to be associated with the various task areas?

3. What personal characteristics are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?
   - 3.1 What personal characteristics are most important in the overall work of a superintendent?
   - 3.2 What specific personal characteristics are perceived to be associated with the various task areas?
4. What is the relative importance of tasks, skills and personal characteristics in the work of superintendents?
5. How do contingency variables influence the tasks, skills and personal characteristics considered important in the work of superintendents?
   - 5.1 To what extent is the definition of tasks and task areas influenced by contingency variables?
   - 5.2 How do contingency variables influence the overall skills expectations for superintendents?
   - 5.3 How do contingency variables influence the expectations of skills for superintendents for different task areas?
   - 5.4 How do contingency variables influence the overall personal characteristics expectations for superintendents?
   - 5.5 How do contingency variables influence the expectations of personal characteristics for superintendents for different task areas?

Data were gathered from a variety of sources, primarily through questionnaires and interviews, in order to answer the above research questions. The questionnaire was deemed to be the most suitable means

of collecting an extensive amount of data from a broad range of sources. In this study of perceptions with respect to tasks, skills and characteristics, data were obtained from respondents representing a number of different subgroups including superintendents, deputy superintendents, school board chairmen, principals and Alberta Education managers. The study also covered a large geographical area, the Province of Alberta.

Interviews were conducted with a small number of superintendents, deputy superintendents, board chairmen, principals and Alberta Education managers. The purposes of the interviews were 1) to triangulate data collection by using another method of collecting data, 2) to gather supplementary data suggested by a preliminary questionnaire analysis, and 3) to gather supplementary data pertaining to environmental contingency variables.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire data collection procedures are outlined in this section. Particular attention is given to approaches to developing an instrument, defining a sample, and distributing the questionnaires.

Development Strategies

Development of the questionnaire evolved over an eight month period— from a pilot questionnaire to one that had been validated.

Drafting the questionnaire. The School Superintendent Study

Questionnaire was constructed to gather information identified in the conceptual framework. A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

Tasks of a superintendent are the subject matter of Section One of the questionnaire. The tasks were first organized under the following ten categories: Policy Development, Evaluation, Working With Trustees, Public Relations, Managing Staff, Business Management, Developing School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation. These task areas were arrived at through an analysis of the literature, particularly studies of Alberta superintendents by Fast (1968) and Downey (1976).

After deciding upon the above ten task areas, the researcher further utilized the Downey and Fast questionnaires as sources of task statements. The Project A.S.K. Questionnaire (1980), developed by the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Alberta to identify necessary Administrative Skills and Knowledge of principals, was used as a guide in considering tasks of superintendents. A further check was made of tasks included in sixteen evaluation forms that were being used in the evaluation of superintendents in Alberta.

Each task statement was introduced with an action word in order to make the task description more meaningful to the reader. Superintendents were assumed to utilize a process or action when carrying out tasks. The action words that were utilized in questicnnaire task statements were: coordinating, participating, establishing, monitoring, promoting, ensuring, providing, developing,

organizing and involving. The two action words that were used most frequently appear in the following examples from the questionnaire: "Participate in meetings that involve the entire board," and "Coordinate teacher evaluations." This method of wording task statements was utilized previously by Downey (1976), who incorporated process introductions in task statements.

After experimenting with various scales, a Likert-type response scale, ranging from Very High to Very Low, was found to be most suitable for rating the importance of tasks.

In the second section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to select the most important skills and the most important characteristics in the overall work and in each task area.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive and Affective Domains was the organizing framework for classifying skills and personal characteristics. A requirement for an item to be identified as a skill was that the criterion could be classified as fitting into the Cognitive Domain in the Knowledge, Intellectual Abilities or Skills dimensions. "Listen to others," and "Synthesize information," are examples of skills that were contained in this section of the questionnaire. Two criteria met another skill requirement of fitting into the Psychomotor Domain. These two skills were "Speaks clearly" and "Writes clearly." To be classified as personal characteristics, criteria needed to fit into the Affective Domain as "internally consistent qualities of character and conscience" (1957: 7). "Consistency" and "trustworthiness" are examples of personal characteristics that were included in the questionnaire.

Selection of skills to include in the questionnaire was a straightforward procedure. The sources of the skills were mainly the Downey questionnaire, supplemented by other research literature. The researcher began with a list of ten general skills and accompanying definitions. The original list was expanded to eighteen skills, and definitions were replaced by a verb phrase for each skill.

Selection of characteristics to include in the questionnaire was more complex. Decisions regarding which personal characteristics to include in the questionnaire were made after an extensive review of related research. The original list of characteristics included in excess of forty words and accompanying definitions. Through use of Roget's II: The New Thesaurus (1980), Roget's International Thesaurus (1962) and Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms (1973), duplications were eliminated to create a list of fifteen more distinct words. Wording of definitions was problematic. Consequently, definitions were dropped from the questionnaire in favor of a listing of words. One word, or in some cases two to three synonyms, were listed together to describe a particular trait.

Fifteen characteristics were abstracted from the literature. These characteristics were as follows: adaptable, well-groomed, ambitious, trustworthy, approachable, caring, persistent, stress tolerant, confident, intuitive, consistent, intelligent, creative, humorous and enthusiastic. A survey of thirty trustees and administrators was carried out in June, 1985 at an Alberta School Trustees' Association superintendents' workshop session in which respondents were asked to identify criteria that should be used in evaluating school

superintendents. The data from this survey, and data from sixteen Alberta school superintendents' evaluation instruments, confirmed that the majority of the above characteristics were being used in the evaluation of Alberta superintendents.

The third section of the questionnaire was concerned with the importance of tasks, skills and characteristics. In order to determine the importance of each of the above elements in the role of a superintendent, respondents were asked to rate the importance that should be given to each of tasks, skills and characteristics in determining the behavior of a superintendent.

Section Four was designed to gather information about contingency variables. Background characteristics included present position and years of experience. Situational factors included type of school jurisdiction and size of school jurisdiction— size being defined in terms of the number of teachers employed.

Validating the questionnaire. Drafts of the questionnaire were validated using different types of respondents. The initial version of the questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of eight professors of educational administration. A subsequent version was pilot tested with eleven educational administrators. The pilot test respondents were selected on the basis of previous experience with superintendents and exclusion from the study sample. Pilot test respondents included one university professor with previous experience as a superintendent, school trustee and board chairman; ten Alberta Education managers— six with previous superintendent experience; one with previous

superintendent, school trustee and chairman experience; one with deputy superintendent experience; and two with previous school principal experience.

The pilot study test package consisted of a covering letter, questionnaire and comment sheet. Each respondent completed and returned a questionnaire and comment sheet.

As a result of the pilot study, several changes were made to the questionnaire. In the task section of the questionnaire, duplications were eliminated, and items containing two concepts were changed to one concept items. The request that respondents rate the importance of each skill and characteristic was eliminated. For each task area, respondents were requested to select the three most important skills and the three most important characteristics from the lists provided.

Format of the questionnaire. The guidelines for questionnaire design developed by Dillman (1978), Cote (1984) and Dillihunt (1984) were used in the construction of the School Superintendent Study questionnaire. For example, a front cover was designed specifically for the study. The cover incorporated a simple graphic illustration, a title and basic directions that stated the purpose of the study and thanked respondents for participating in the survey. Attention was also given to the internal design of the questionnaire: directions were concise, questions were made to fit the pages and background information questions were placed at the end of the questionnaire. Questions were kept simple and easy to read, the response behavior was kept simple and the questions were intended to reflect a sense of

continuity. Care was also taken in designing a simple back cover; respondents were provided with an open-ended response opportunity, a return address was indicated, and respondents were offered a copy of a summary of results in return for their cooperation.

Questionnaire Sample

The questionnaire sample was selected under the assumption that superintendents, deputy superintendents, board chairmen, principals and Alberta Education managers are the groups most knowledgeable about the superintendency. The Alberta populations of superintendents (107), deputy superintendents (97) and board chairmen (146) were selected to receive questionnaires. A random sample of 272 principals was also selected to receive the questionnaire survey. The questionnaire sample also included twenty-six Alberta Education managers selected from those holding positions as Deputy Minister, Assistant Deputy Ministers, Regional Office Directors, Associate Directors and Administrative Consultants. These professional staff are categorized as "managers" by the Alberta Government. They were selected because each person was knowledgeable about and influenced the role of superintendent. The questionnaire sample therefore consisted of a total of 647 potential respondents.

Data Collection Techniques

In an attempt to assure a higher response rate, the researcher used a number of techniques Dillman (1978), Cote (1984) and Dillihunt (1984) found to be effective in increasing returns. Covering letters

were individually addressed. Covering letters were signed by the researcher and a rubber stamp insignia of the questionnaire cover design appeared on the right hand side of the page opposite the signature. A postage-paid self-addressed envelope was included in each package, along with a covering letter and questionnaire. Packages were sent by first class mail early in the week. One week later, a first follow-up postcard was mailed to each recipient. Three weeks later, a second follow-up package was sent to respondents who had not returned questionnaires. Appendix B includes copies of the two covering letters and postcard.

Rate of Return

Table 1 reveals that a total of 534 usable questionnaires out of 648 questionnaires were returned, for a return rate of 82.4%. The rates of return were high for four subgroups, with returns of 100% for Alberta Education managers, 91% for superintendents, 85% for deputy superintendents and 82% for principals. The rate of return for the Chairmen subgroup was 71%.

Interviews

In this section the interview procedures are described in terms of developing an interview guide, defining the sample and collecting the data.

Table 1

Questionnaire Returns by Respondent Subgroups

Position of Respondent	No. Sent	No. Returned	Response Rate
Alberta Education Managers	26	26	100.0%
Deputy/Assistant Superintendents	97	83	85.6%
School Board Chairmen	146	104	71.2%
School Principals	272	223	82.0%
Superintendents	107	98	91.6%
TOTALS	648	534	82.4%

Development of an Interview Guide

The comment section of the questionnaire included a request to indicate the issues which should be addressed in the follow-up interviews. The responses to this question were used to formulate seven open-ended questions pertaining to leadership, situation influences, people influences, politics, change, local appointments and future developments in the superintendency. The comments contained in questionnaire responses were also used to formulate probing questions for each of the seven general questions. The interview guide is included in Appendix C.

Interview Sample

Thirty respondents were selected for interviews from among superintendent, deputy superintendent, chairmen, principal and Alberta Education manager subgroups. Superintendents, deputy superintendents and board chairmen were selected for interviews using a nomination technique. The members of the executive of the Conference of Alberta School Superintendents association were involved in the selection of the superintendent and deputy superintendent sample. Each executive member was asked to nominate a total of three superintendents and deputy superintendents who were considered to be knowledgeable about the role of the superintendent and who represented different types of school jurisdictions. The twelve persons whose names were mentioned most frequently were selected for the interviews. The nine superintendents and three deputy superintendents represented city, town district, multiple district, county and school division types of school

jurisdictions.

The Executive Director of the Alberta School Trustees' Association was asked to nominate board chairmen who were considered to be knowledgeable about the role of the superintendent and who represented different types of school jurisdictions. The seven trustees nominated came from city, town district, multiple district, county and school division types of school jurisdictions.

A total of seven principals was selected randomly from the principal questionnaire sample.

Four Alberta Education managers were selected from the questionnaire sample: the deputy minister, one assistant deputy minister and two regional office directors.

In general, the interview sample represented the same subgroups that were included in the questionnaire sample and the different types of school jurisdictions found in Alberta.

Conducting the Interviews

The researcher arranged interviews with twenty-nine of the thirty respondents selected. All twenty-nine interviews were conducted by the researcher in various locations throughout Alberta. In conducting the interviews, the researcher tried to project impartiality, empathy, integrity, flexibility, self-confidence and interest. Researcher behavior emphasized listening; a concerted effort was made to talk only when necessary to direct the conversation. The interviews varied in length from thirty to sixty minutes.

Analysis of Questionnaire and Interview Data

Questionnaire data were processed by computer using selected programs from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. To determine the relative importance of the fifty-eight tasks, means were calculated for each task. A subsequent grouping of the tasks and calculation of general task area means enabled the researcher to determine the relative importance of the ten task areas.

For data on skills and characteristics, the following procedures were followed. The frequencies of first, second and third choices were added together for each question and then the sums were converted to percentage of respondents selecting each skill or characteristic in the work of a superintendent and in each task area. These percentages were used as a base to identify important skills and characteristics for the overall work and task areas work of superintendents.

For the data pertaining to the overall importance of skills, characteristics and tasks, means were also calculated. The means were used to determine the relative importance of tasks, skills and characteristics in the work of a superintendent.

The above analyses were carried out for the total sample and for each respondent subgroup— Alberta Education managers, deputy superintendents, chairmen, principals and superintendents.

A one way analysis of variance was used to assist in the analysis of contingency variables pertaining to tasks. The contingency variables included background characteristics of respondents— present position, number of years of experience as educators and number of years

experience as trustees-- and the situational variables of type of school jurisdiction and size of school jurisdiction.

A content analysis was performed on the interview data. Each of the twenty-nine interview tapes was transcribed. The data were then recorded under subheadings that resembled the seven interview questions. The ideas in each question area were further organized into a number of subcategories. Frequencies of mention of similar ideas and the context in which the particular ideas were expressed was noted. These procedures enabled the researcher to identify patterns in the data and subsequently to select quotations that reflected these patterns.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Results of the analysis of the questionnaire data are presented in this chapter. The sections are focused successively on tasks of superintendents, skills of superintendents and characteristics of superintendents, and relationships among tasks, skills and characteristics. Relationships of contingencies to each of tasks, skills and characteristics are discussed in terms of position of respondents, size of school jurisdiction and type of school jurisdiction. The chapter concludes with a comparison of levels of importance of tasks, skills and characteristics.

Tasks of Superintendents

In this section are presented results pertaining to the following research questions: "What tasks are important in the work of superintendents?" and "To what extent is the definition of tasks and task areas influenced by contingency variables?"

Importance of Task Areas

The first task subquestion was: "What are the perceived levels of importance of various task areas to the superintendency?" The task areas were defined by fifty-eight tasks, that were classified into ten

task areas when the questionnaire was being constructed.

The sample of Alberta Education managers, deputy superintendents, school board chairmen, school principals and superintendents rated the levels of importance of the tasks. On the basis of these responses, means for the tasks in each task area were averaged to formulate a task area mean. The highest possible mean was 5. The actual means and rankings of the task areas were as follows:

Rank	Task Area	Mean
1	Policy Development	4.46
2	Evaluation	4.18
3	Working With Trustees	4.09
4	Public Relations	3.93
5	Managing Staff	3.83
6	Business Management	3.72
7	Developing School Programs	3.26
8	School Facilities	3.25
9	Student Services	2.81
10	Transportation	2.53

The task areas which had the highest means were: Policy Development, Evaluation, Working With Trustees, Public Relations, Managing Staff and Business Management. The means were lower for the other task areas of Developing School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation.

Most Important Tasks

The second subquestion related to tasks was: "What are the most

important tasks of superintendents?" Table 2 includes the mean ratings of the ten most important tasks. The top ranked task of the fifty-eight identified tasks, which had a mean of 4.85, was "participate in meetings that involve the entire board." Second in importance, with a mean of 4.71, was "establish channels of communication with trustees." Third in importance, with a mean of 4.68, was "identify priorities for policy development." The tenth ranked task, with a mean of 4.43, was "recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments." Four of the top ten tasks were from the Policy area, two were from Public Relations, two were from Evaluation, and one each was from Managing Staff and Working With Trustees.

Least Important Tasks

The third task research subquestion asked, "What tasks are least important in the work of a superintendent?" The mean ratings included in Table 3 show that the fifty-eight or lowest ranking task, which had a mean of 2.18, was "promoting time efficiency in bus transportation" and the forty-ninth task, with a mean of 2.88, was "promoting safety of students related to school bus operation." These two tasks were Transportation tasks. The other lesser important tasks were from the following task areas: three from Student Services, and one from each of Managing Staff, Public Relations, Business Management, School Facilities and School Programs task areas.

A ranking of all the fifty-eight tasks is provided in Table 4, Appendix D. Policy Development, Evaluation, Working With Trustees, Public Relations and Managing Staff tasks were perceived to be more

Table 2

Ranking of the Ten Most Important Tasks as Rated by Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Board Chairmen, Principals and Superintendents

n=534

Rank	Task Area	Task	Mean
1	Working With Trustees	Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.85
2	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.71
3	Policy Development	Identify priorities for policy development	4.68
4	Policy Development	Support board policies in public	4.68
5	Policy Development	Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.67
6	Policy Development	Coordinate development of policy	4.50
7	Public Relations	Promote the school system in the community	4.46
8	Evaluation	Participate in the evaluation of the superintendent (self-evaluation)	4.46
9	Evaluation	Participate in principal evaluations	4.45
10	Managing Staff	Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.43

Table 3

Ranking of the Ten Least Important Tasks as Rated by Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Board Chairmen, Principals and Superintendents

n=534

Rank	Task Area	Task	Mean
49	Bus Transportation	Promote safety of students related to school bus operation	2.88
50	Managing Staff	Involve Alberta Education in school system decision-making	2.82
51	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication with students	2.70
52	Business Management	Coordinate business procedures in central office	2.65
53	Student Services	Enforce student attendance policy	2.59
54	Student Services	Ensure that pupil personnel records are kept up to date	2.54
55	School Facilities	Monitor the requisition and purchase of equipment and furnishings	2.44
56	Student Services	Coordinate planning of student health services and programs	2.31
57	Developing School Programs	Plan for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system	2.19
58	Bus Transportation	Promote time efficiency in bus transportation	2.18

important than tasks that involved Business Management, Developing School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation.

Influence of Contingency Variables on Task Expectations

A contingency variables research question was: "To what extent is the definition of tasks and task areas influenced by contingency variables?" These variables included the positions occupied by respondents, size of school jurisdiction and type of school jurisdiction.

Position of respondents. Respondents were asked to identify their position in education as Alberta Education manager, deputy superintendent, school board chairman, school principal or superintendent. To determine if there were differences across position of respondents in expectations of importance of the task areas, each of the above subgroup's means for the tasks for each task area were averaged. Table 5 presents a summary of the importance of task areas as perceived by position subgroups.

Policy development was ranked first in importance by all subgroups. Evaluation and Working With Trustees were ranked second or third by each of the subgroups. The Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Principals and Superintendents subgroups ranked Public Relations fourth and Managing Staff as fifth in importance, while the Chairmen subgroup reversed the order of importance, so that Managing Staff received a fourth rank and Public Relations a fifth rank.

Table 5

Levels of Importance of Task Areas as Perceived by the Total Sample and Position Subgroups

Rank	Total Sample	Position Subgroup				
		Alberta Education	Deputy Supt.	Board Chairman	Principal	Supt.
1	Policy Devel 4.46	Policy Devel. 4.63	Policy Devel. 4.46	Policy Devel. 4.38	Policy Devel. 4.44	Policy Devel. 4.55
2	Evaluation 4.18	Working With Trustees 4.30	Working With Trustees 4.22	Evaluation 4.38	Working With Trustees 4.05	Evaluation 4.30
3	Working With Trustees 4.09	Evaluation 4.14	Evaluation 4.17	Working With Trustees 3.90	Evaluation 4.04	Working With Trustees 4.26
4	Public Relations 3.94	Public Relations 4.10	Public Relations 3.98	Managing Staff 3.82	Public Relations 3.93	Public Relations 3.95
5	Managing Staff 3.83	Managing Staff 3.85	Managing Staff 3.84	Public Relations 3.80	Managing Staff 3.77	Managing Staff 3.95
6	Business Management 3.72	Business Management 3.70	Business Management 3.76	Business Management 3.61	Business Management 3.73	Business Management 3.83
7	School Programs 3.26	School Facilities 3.33	School Facilities 3.29	School Programs 3.53	School Facilities 3.20	School Facilities 3.40
8	School Facilities 3.25	School Programs 3.32	School Programs 3.21	School Facilities 3.20	School Programs 3.14	School Programs 3.29
9	Student Services 2.81	Bus Transport. 3.06	Student Services 2.81	Student Services 2.93	Student Services 2.71	Student Services 2.87
10	Bus. Transport. 2.53	Student Services 3.01	Bus Transport. 2.65	Bus Transport. 2.45	Bus Transport. 2.39	Bus Transport. 2.67

Business Management was ranked sixth by all subgroups. School Facilities and School Programs were ranked seventh and eighth by Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Principals and Superintendents subgroups. The ranking of these two task areas were reversed in order of importance as far as the Chairmen subgroup were concerned, that is, School Programs were seventh and School Facilities were eighth in importance. Of least importance were Student Services and Bus Transportation, receiving respective ranks of ninth or tenth from the subgroups.

In summary, the ranking of task areas was the same for Deputy Superintendents and Principals. Alberta Education Managers and Superintendents each differed in rankings from these subgroups for two task areas and Chairmen differed in rankings for six task areas.

Position subgroup comparisons were also calculated for the ten tasks that were considered to be most important to superintendent performance. Table 6 lists the means for each task for each position subgroup and an analysis of variance calculation revealed that there were significant differences among the subgroups for seven of ten tasks. For the most important task, "participate in meetings that involve the entire board," the mean for Chairmen was significantly lower than the means for Deputy Superintendents and Superintendents. Chairmen also placed significantly less importance than either Principals or Superintendents for the second most important task, "establish channels of communication with trustees." Chairmen assumed significantly less importance to three other superintendent tasks: "develop long-range plans for the school system, promote the school

Table 6

Levels of Importance of the Ten Most Important Tasks with Respondents Grouped According to Position

TASK AREA and TASKS	Position Subgroup n = 534					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	1 Alla.Ed. n=26	2 Dep.Sup. n=83	3 Chair. n=104	4 Prin. n=223	5 Supt. n=98			
WORKING WITH TRUSTEES								
Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.89	4.90	4.71*	4.84	4.93	4.06	.0030	2-3, 3-5
PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.81	4.73	4.53	4.74	4.81	3.57	.0070	3-4, 3-5
POLICY DEVELOPMENT								
Identify priorities for policy development	4.88	4.63	4.62	4.68	4.74	2.06	.0853	NS
Support board policies in public	4.79	4.82	4.63	4.57	4.83	4.55	.0013	2-4, 4-5
Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.69	4.73	4.42	4.71	4.78	6.00	.0001	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Coordinate development of policy	4.62	4.42	4.19	4.35	4.33	1.33	.2577	NS
PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Promote the school system in the community	4.54	4.58	4.13	4.53	4.55	6.01	.0001	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
EVALUATION								
Participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self)	4.69	4.60	4.17	4.40	4.71	5.70	.0002	2-3, 3-5, 4-5
Participate in evaluation of principals	4.62	4.50	4.63	4.30	4.53	3.42	.0090	3-4
MANAGING STAFF								
Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.50	4.46	4.26	4.47	4.45	1.83	.1221	NS

*Significant low mean underlined

system in the community and participate in the evaluation of the superintendent (self-evaluation)." Principals assigned less importance to three tasks: "support board policies in public, participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self-evaluation) and participate in evaluation of principals."

Table 7 in Appendix E provides a comparison of position subgroup means for the fifty-eight tasks. Similar to the top ten tasks comparison, most of the significant differences involved Principals and Chairmen placing less importance on tasks than did other subgroups. For sixteen tasks Principals had significantly lower expectations and for eleven tasks Chairmen had significantly lower expectations than did other subgroups.

Size of school jurisdiction. Table 8 presents information regarding the levels of importance of the task areas as perceived by five size of school jurisdiction subgroups: "Very Small" — less than fifty teachers; "Small" — fifty-one to one hundred teachers; "Medium" — 101 to 200 teachers; "Large" — 201 to 500 teachers; and "Very Large" — greater than 500 teachers.

Policy Development was considered to be most important in four of five of the school jurisdiction subgroups with the exception of the Very Small jurisdiction category, for which Evaluation was ranked as first in importance. The Very Small jurisdictions ranked Policy Development as second in importance. Respondents in the Small, Medium and Large jurisdiction categories ranked the Evaluation task area as second in importance, and those in the Very Large jurisdiction category

Table 8

Levels of Importance of Task Areas as Perceived by the Total Sample and Size of School Jurisdiction Subgroups

Rank	Total Sample	Size of School Jurisdiction				
		Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
1	Policy Devel 4.46	Evaluation 4.46	Policy Devel. 4.55	Policy Devel. 4.41	Policy Devel. 4.56	Policy Devel. 4.40
2	Evaluation 4.18	Policy Devel. 4.38	Evaluation 4.41	Evaluation 4.28	Evaluation 4.26	Working With Trustees 4.10
3	Working With Trustees 4.09	Managing Staff 3.89	Working With Trustees 4.08	Working With Trustees 4.12	Working With Trustees 4.23	Public Relations 4.08
4	Public Relations 3.93	Working With Trustees 3.81	Managing Staff 3.94	Public Relations 3.88	Public Relations 4.02	Evaluation 3.57
5	Managing Staff 3.83	Public Relations 3.75	Public Relations 3.89	Managing Staff 3.85	Business Management 3.83	Business Management 3.55
6	Business Management 3.72	Business Management 3.62	Business Management 3.81	Business Management 3.79	Managing Staff 3.82	Managing Staff 3.54
7	School Programs 3.26	School Programs 3.48	School Programs 3.49	School Facilities 3.32	School Facilities 3.41	Student Services 2.89
8	School Facilities 3.25	School Facilities 3.39	School Facilities 3.29	School Programs 3.27	School Programs 3.27	School Facilities 2.87
9	Student Services 2.81	Student Services 3.02	Student Services 2.82	Student Services 2.88	Student Services 2.94	School Programs 2.87
10	Bus. Transport. 2.53	Bus Transport. 2.45	Bus Transport. 2.57	Bus Transport. 2.58	Bus Transport. 2.64	Bus Transport. 2.25

ranked Evaluation fourth in importance.

Working With Trustees increased in importance with increasing size of school jurisdiction. This task area ranked fourth in Very Small jurisdictions, third in Small, Medium and Large jurisdictions and second in Very Large jurisdictions. A similar trend was noted in the Public Relations task area. Public Relations ranked fifth in Very Small and Small jurisdictions, fourth in Medium and Large jurisdictions and third in Very Large jurisdictions.

Managing Staff was perceived to have decreasing importance with increasing size of school jurisdiction. It was ranked third by Very Small jurisdictions, fourth by Small jurisdictions, fifth by Medium jurisdictions, sixth by Large and Very Large jurisdictions. Business Management was ranked sixth for Very Small, Small and Medium school jurisdiction subgroups and fifth in the Large and Very Large subgroups. School Programs tasks were considered to have decreasing importance as the school juridictions increased in size, receiving a rank of seventh in Very Small and Small jurisdictions, eighth in Medium and Large jurisdictions, and ninth in Very Large jurisdictions. Student Services were ranked ninth by four of five subgroups. Student Services was ninth in importance in Very Small, Small, Medium and Large jurisdictions and seventh in importance in Very Large jurisdictions. Transportation was considered to be the least important task area for superintendents and was ranked tenth by all the five subgroups.

In summary, the Very Small and Small jurisdictions ranked the fifth through tenth task areas the same. The Medium and Large jurisdictions gave the same rank of importance for eight out of ten

task areas. Although there were some similarities, respondents in the Very Large jurisdictions had a tendency to rate the task areas differently from the other subgroups.

When the top ten tasks were compared in a size of school jurisdiction analysis, a number of significant differences resulted. The means in Table 9 show that the Very Small jurisdiction subgroup ascribed significantly lower importance to six of ten tasks. They were lower than the Large subgroup for "participate in meetings that involve the entire board," lower than the Large and Very Large jurisdictions for "establish channels of communication with trustees," lower than Large jurisdictions for "support board policies in public," lower than Large and Very Large jurisdictions for "develop long-range plans for the school system," lower than the other four subgroups for "promote the school system in the community," and lower than Small, Medium and Large subgroups for "recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments." The Very Large jurisdiction subgroup perceived "participate in evaluation of principals" to be of significantly lower importance than did the other four subgroups.

The size of jurisdiction comparison for the fifty-eight tasks, contained in Table 10 in Appendix F, further substantiates the above findings that the majority of significant differences involved the Very Small and Very Large jurisdictions. The Very Large jurisdiction subgroup means were significantly lower for twenty-six tasks and Very Small jurisdiction subgroup means were significantly lower for twelve tasks.

Table 9

Levels of Importance of the Ten Most Important Tasks with Respondents Grouped According to Size of School Jurisdiction

TASK AREA and TASKS	Size of School Jurisdiction n = 504					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) Very Small n=71	(2) Small n=92	(3) Medium n=154	(4) Large n=82	(5) Very Large n=105			
WORKING WITH TRUSTEES								
Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.70*	4.85	4.86	4.93	4.86	2.83	.0242	1-4
PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.52	4.71	4.70	4.79	4.80	2.88	.0223	1-4, 1-5
POLICY DEVELOPMENT								
Identify priorities for policy development	4.58	4.68	4.63	4.77	4.74	2.07	.0832	NS
Support board policies in public	4.55	4.68	4.62	4.87	4.68	2.88	.0225	1-4, 3-4
Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.42	4.62	4.64	4.81	4.81	6.15	.0001	1-4, 1-5
Coordinate development of policy	4.44	4.58	4.45	4.51	4.53	.80	.5268	NS
PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Promote the school system in the community	3.97	4.43	4.51	4.62	4.67	10.58	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
EVALUATION								
Participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self)	4.39	4.36	4.39	4.46	4.65	1.63	.1645	NS
Participate in evaluation of principals	4.61	4.73	4.53	4.72	3.75	29.67	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
MANAGING STAFF								
Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.18	4.52	4.48	4.51	4.36	3.30	.0110	1-2, 1-3, 1-4

*Significant low mean underlined

Type of school jurisdiction. Data were also organized according to type of school jurisdiction, whether City, County, Division, Several Districts and Town. Table 11 shows the ranking of task areas when the data were analyzed by type of school jurisdiction subgroups. Policy Development was considered to be the most important task area in City, County, Division and Town types of school jurisdictions. In only the Several Districts type of jurisdiction was Policy Development ranked second in importance.

There was more variability concerning the perceived importance of a number of other task areas. Evaluation ranked first in the Several Districts classification, second in Counties, Divisions and Towns, and fourth in Cities. Public Relations ranked third in Cities, fourth in Divisions, and fifth in Counties, Several Districts and Towns. Managing Staff was ranked third by Several Districts and Town respondents, fourth by County respondents, fifth by Division respondents, sixth by City respondents.

School Programs and School Facilities task areas were ranked seventh or eighth by the type of school jurisdiction subgroups. School Programs were considered to be seventh in importance in Counties, Several Districts and Towns subgroups and eighth in Cities and Divisions subgroups. School Facilities tasks were considered to be seventh in importance in Cities and Divisions and eighth in Counties, Several Districts and Towns.

Student Services and Transportation were ranked ninth or tenth in importance. The majority of school jurisdiction types, including Counties, Divisions, Several Districts, and Towns subgroups, considered

Table 11

Levels of Importance of Task Areas as Perceived by the Total Sample and Type of School Jurisdiction Subgroups

Rank	Total Sample	Type of Jurisdiction				
		City	County	Division	Several Dist.	Town
1	Policy Devel. 4.46	Policy Devel. 4.49	Policy Devel. 4.46	Policy Devel. 4.45	Evaluation 4.44	Policy Devel. 4.43
2	Evaluation 4.18	Working With Trustees 4.24	Evaluation 4.30	Evaluation 4.29	Policy Devel. 4.33	Evaluation 4.42
3	Working With Trustees 4.09	Public Relations 4.09	Working With Trustees 4.07	Working With Trustees 4.09	Managing Staff 3.96	Managing Staff 3.94
4	Public Relations 3.93	Evaluation 3.87	Managing Staff 3.89	Public Relations 3.92	Working With Trustees 3.80	Working With Trustees 3.86
5	Managing Staff 3.83	Business Management 3.70	Public Relations 3.85	Managing Staff 3.91	Public Relations 3.70	Public Relations 3.81
6	Business Management 3.72	Managing Staff 3.65	Business Management 3.81	Business Management 3.73	Business Management 3.63	Business Management 3.80
7	School Programs 3.26	School Facilities 3.12	School Programs 3.40	School Facilities 3.29	School Programs 3.46	School Programs 3.57
8	School Facilities 3.25	School Programs 3.05	School Facilities 3.38	School Programs 3.25	School Facilities 3.20	School Facilities 3.36
9	Student Services 2.81	Bus Transport. 2.31	Student Services 2.84	Student Services 2.84	Student Services 2.91	Student Services 3.11
10	Bus. Transport. 2.53	Student Services 2.21	Bus Transport. 2.77	Bus Transport. 2.55	Bus Transport. 2.28	Bus Transport. 2.62

Student Services to be ninth in importance and Transportation to be tenth in importance. The Cities subgroup reversed this order and ranked Transportation ninth and Student Services tenth.

There were also differences among the subgroups in a top ten tasks comparison. Table 12 reveals that the Cities subgroup assigned significantly less importance than did the Several Districts subgroup to the two most important tasks " participate in meetings that involve the entire board and establish channels of communication with trustees." Several Districts respondents placed significantly less importance than did City, County and Division respondents to "develop long-range plans for the school system" and "promote the school system in the community." The Town subgroup also placed significantly less importance than did the City subgroup to "promote the school system in the community." Cities respondents assigned significantly less importance to "participate in evaluation of principals," than did Counties, Divisions and Several Districts respondents.

Table 13 in Appendix G provides complete information regarding a type of school jurisdiction comparison for the fifty-eight tasks. The Cities subgroup held significantly lower expectations than other subgroups for fourteen of these tasks. This finding offers further support to the above discussion that the majority of the significant differences can be attributed to the City respondents. The number of other significantly lower means involved five tasks for the Several Districts subgroup, three for Counties and one for the Town subgroup.

Table 12

Levels of Importance of the Ten Most Important Tasks with Respondents Grouped According to Type of School Jurisdiction

TASK AREA and TASKS	Type of School Jurisdiction n = 491					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) City n=160	(2) County n=129	(3) Div. n=127	(4) Sev. Dist n=38	(5) Town n=37			
WORKING WITH TRUSTEES								
Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.93*	4.85	4.82	4.66	4.78	3.06	.0100	1-4
PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.81	4.64	4.77	4.50	4.65	3.12	.0087	1-4
POLICY DEVELOPMENT								
Identify priorities for policy development	4.71	4.71	4.69	4.45	4.62	2.67	.0213	NS
Support board policies in public	4.76	4.55	4.73	4.55	4.65	2.28	.0459	NS
Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.81	4.61	4.72	4.26	4.59	6.35	.0000	1-4, 2-4, 3-4
Coordinate development of policy	4.58	4.50	4.42	4.34	4.46	1.55	.1726	NS
PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Promote the school system in the community	4.67	4.47	4.50	3.95	4.49	7.31	.0000	1-4, 1-5, 2-4, 3-4
EVALUATION								
Participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self)	4.60	4.29	4.45	4.39	4.27	2.36	.0392	NS
Participate in evaluation of principals	4.15	4.59	4.56	4.66	4.57	6.42	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4
MANAGING STAFF								
Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.48	4.43	4.50	4.21	4.14	2.49	.0305	NS

*Significant low mean underlined

Skills of Superintendents

The second research question for the study was: "What skills are important in performing the tasks of superintendents?" Questionnaire respondents were asked to select from a list of eighteen skills the first, second and third most important skills in the overall work of a superintendent, as well as the first, second and third most important skills in each task area. The frequencies of first, second and third choices were added together for each question and then the sums were converted to percentages of respondents selecting each skill in the overall work of a superintendent and in each task area. These percentages were used as a base to identify important skills for the overall work and task areas work of superintendents.

Overall Skills Expectations

This section presents findings regarding the first skills research subquestion: "What skills are most important in the overall work of a superintendent?" Figure 2 presents a profile of the levels of importance of various skills in the overall work of a superintendent. Making decisions was considered to be the most important skill needed by a superintendent according to 48.7% of respondents. Second and third, and of about similar importance with ratings of 36.2% and 34.1%, were abilities of delegating responsibilities and being sensitive. Synthesizing information and relating to others were next, in a mid range of importance. Lower importance was accorded to resolving conflicts, analyzing information, gathering information, taking risks,

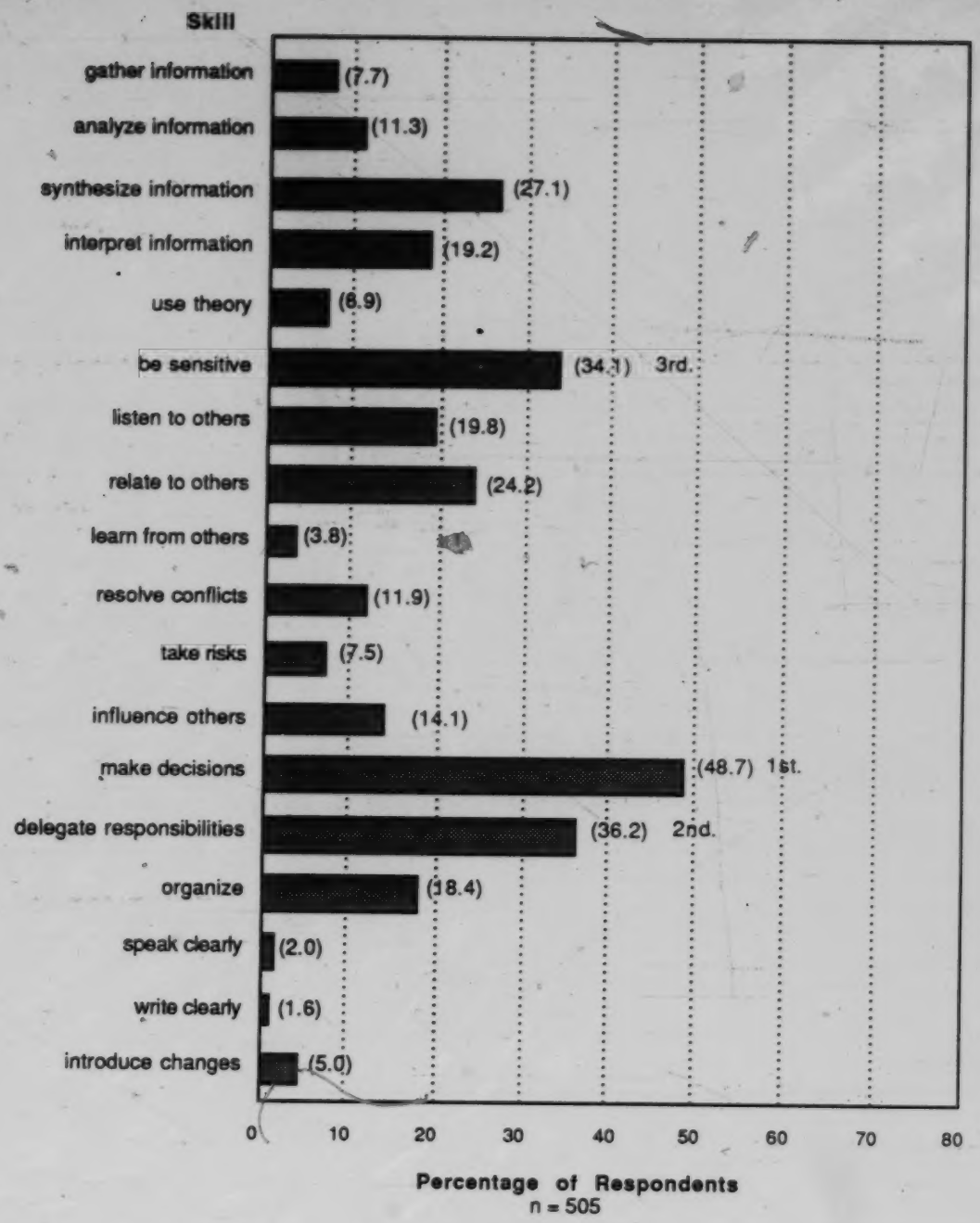

Figure 2

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

using theory and introducing changes. The skills of learning from others, speaking clearly and writing clearly were considered to be of lowest general importance to a school superintendent.

A general pattern suggested by the above findings is that respondents expected superintendents to make decisions and at the same time possess people skills of delegating responsibilities, being sensitive, relating to others and being able to resolve conflicts. In addition, superintendents were expected to have developed higher order cognitive skills of synthesizing information and analyzing information.

Influence of Contingency Variables on Overall Skills Expectations

A contingency variables research subquestion was, "How do contingency variables influence the overall skills expectations for superintendents?" The variables examined included: position occupied by respondents, size of school jurisdiction and type of school jurisdiction. The levels of importance of the various skills for each variable are presented as line graphs. A spread in perceptions of twenty percent or greater among subgroups was established as a guideline to warrant presentation of findings related to that skill. Twenty percent is an arbitrary selection that was made after an examination of graphs revealed that this percentage seemed to be the most appropriate guideline to identify major differences among subgroups. There are arrows on the graphs that point to where the greater than twenty percent variations are located. This presentation of findings reports the greater than twenty percent variations in the top three skills.

A comparison by position occupied by respondents is presented in Figure 3. Although making decisions was considered to be the most important skill by all the subgroups, there was considerable variation among the subgroups regarding the relative importance of decision-making. The degree of importance for decision-making was highest for Alberta Education Managers, second for Superintendents, third for Principals, fourth for Deputy Superintendents and a low fifth for Chairmen. For the third most important skill of being sensitive, expectations of Deputy Superintendents, Chairmen and Superintendents clustered at a medium range of importance, expectations of Alberta Education Managers showed the lowest importance level and expectations of Principals showed a considerably higher importance level than other respondent groups.

A second contingency comparison involved a size of school jurisdiction analysis. Figure 4 shows the profiles for the five different size of school jurisdictions. The degrees of importance of the first and third most important skills, making decisions and being sensitive, are similar. It is only for the second most important skill that there were larger differences among the subgroups. Delegating responsibilities became more important as a school jurisdiction became larger.

Figure 5 presents the third contingency comparison according to type of school jurisdiction. The profiles for the five juridisdiction subgroups were similar except for one skill. For the most important skill of decision-making larger differences were noted; the City, County and Division respondents thought that decision-making was more

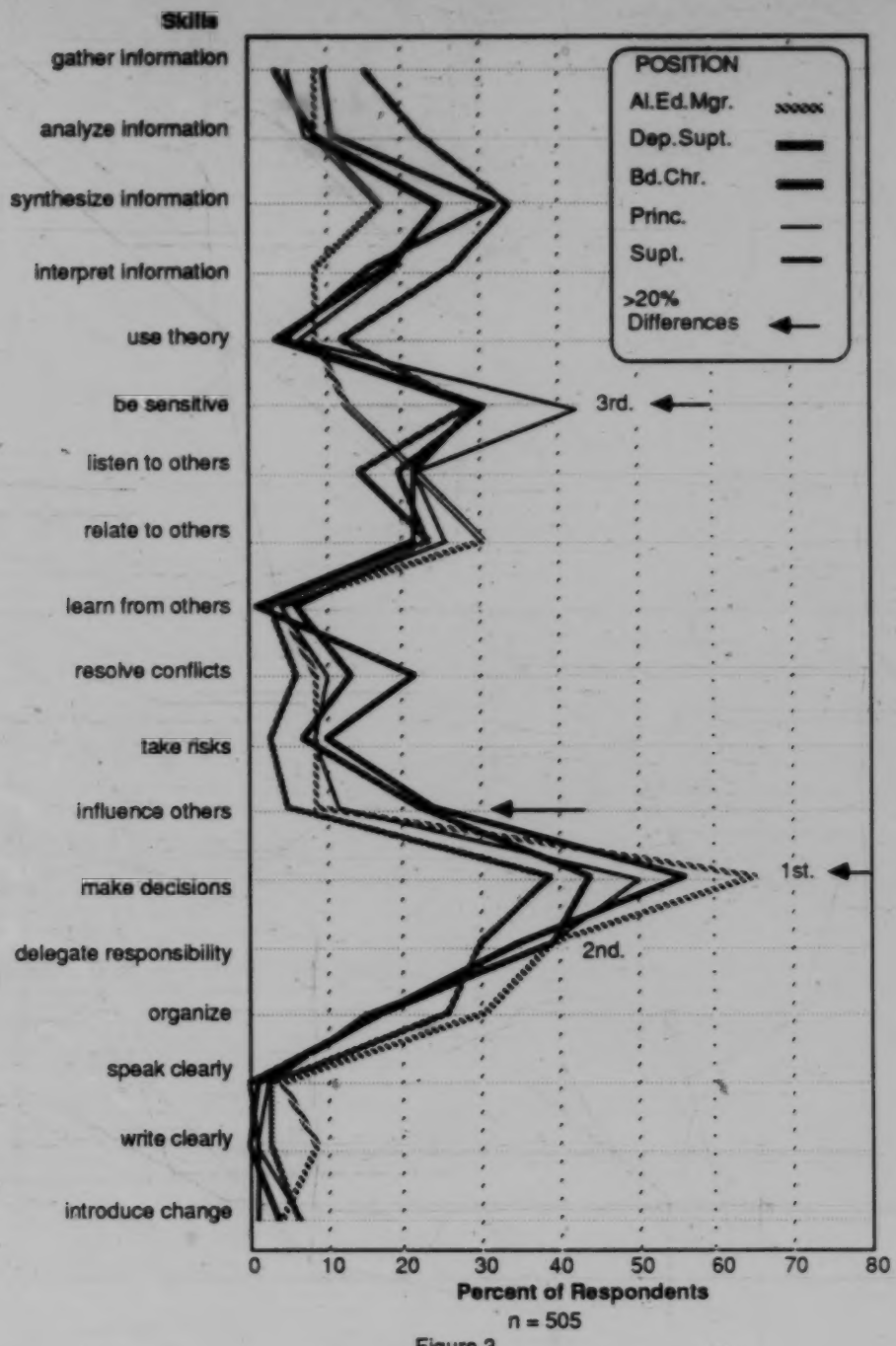

Figure 3

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

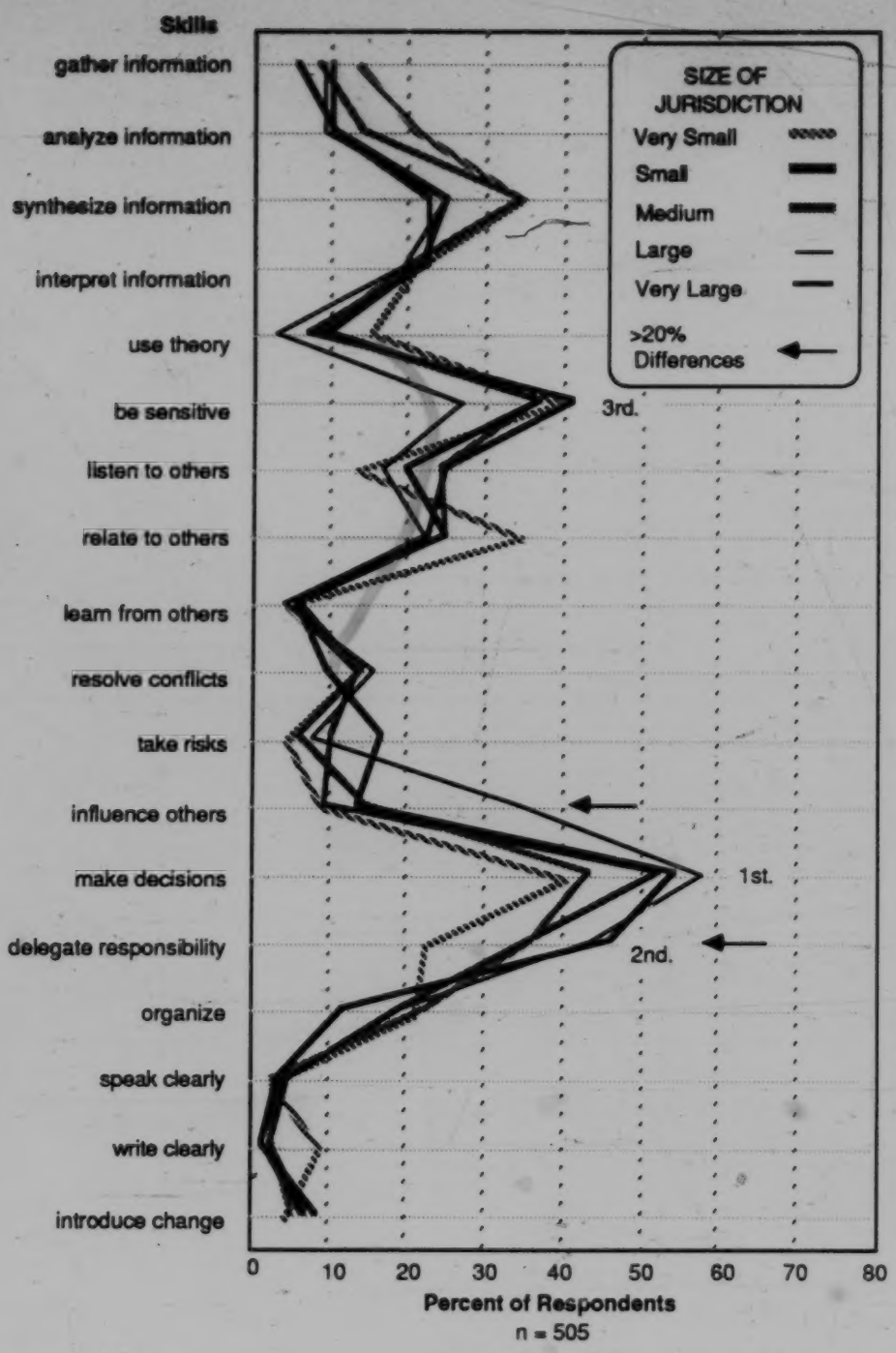

Figure 4

Size of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

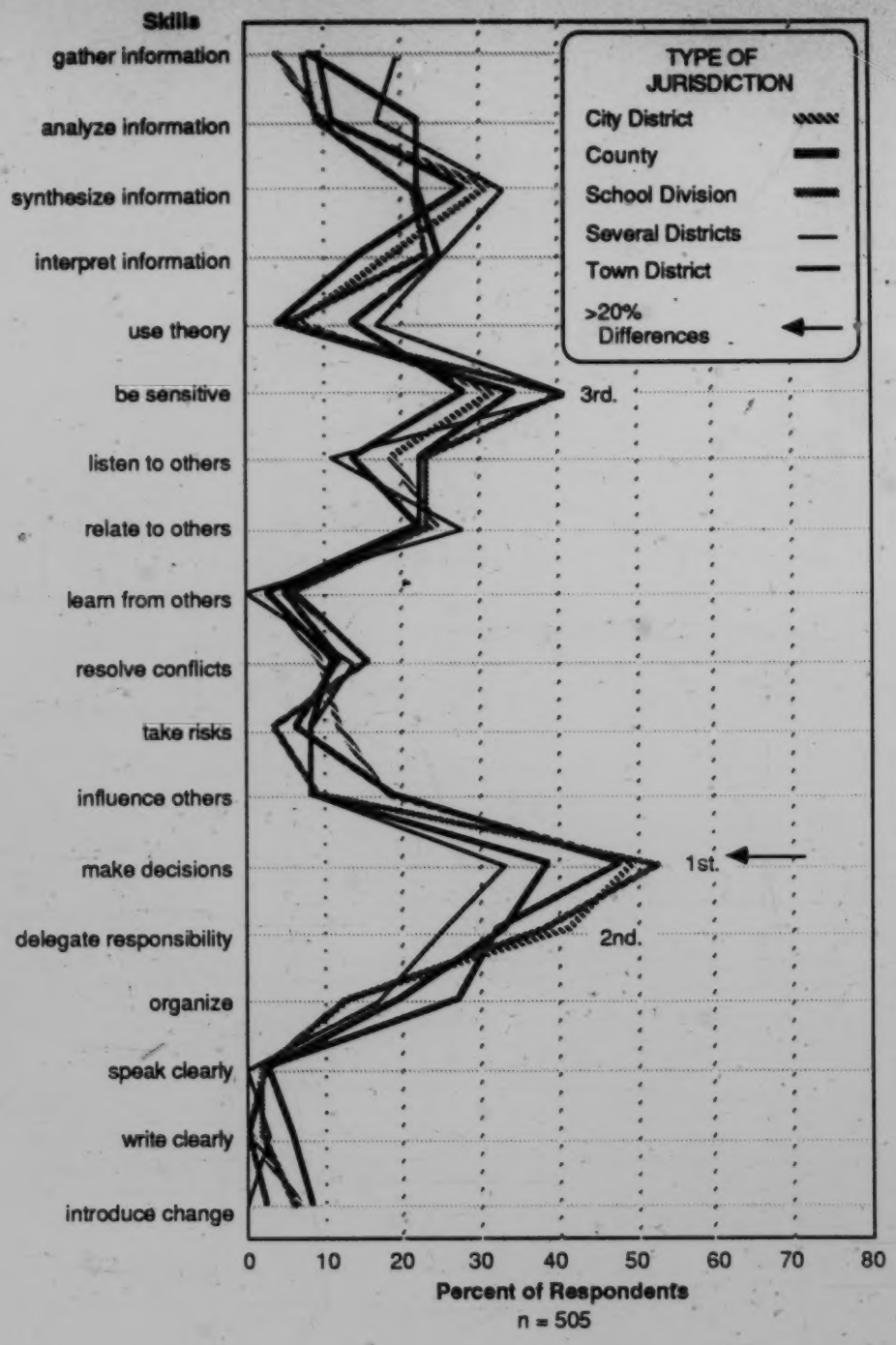

Figure 5

Type of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

important than did Several Districts and Town respondents.

The above findings showed that the degrees of differences among the subgroups were larger in a position occupied by respondents comparison, in contrast to smaller degrees of differences among subgroups noted in size and type of school jurisdiction comparisons.

Relationships of Skills and Task Areas

In addition to investigating overall skills requirements, the study also investigated: "What specific skills are perceived to be associated with the various task areas?" Study findings for this question are presented as profiles, that illustrate the levels of importance of the eighteen skills for each task area.

Skills for each task area were also considered in terms of another research question: "How do contingency variables influence the expectations of skills for superintendents for different task areas?" This discussion is limited to presenting findings related to comparisons concerning positions occupied by respondents, since the majority of larger differences pertain to this contingency variable.

Policy development. Information skills were considered to be most important in the Developing Policy task area. Figure 6 reveals that synthesizing information, selected by 57.6% of respondents, was considered to be most important, gathering information was second in importance (32.5%) and analyzing information was third in importance (32.3%).

Figure 7 presents more information concerning the degrees of

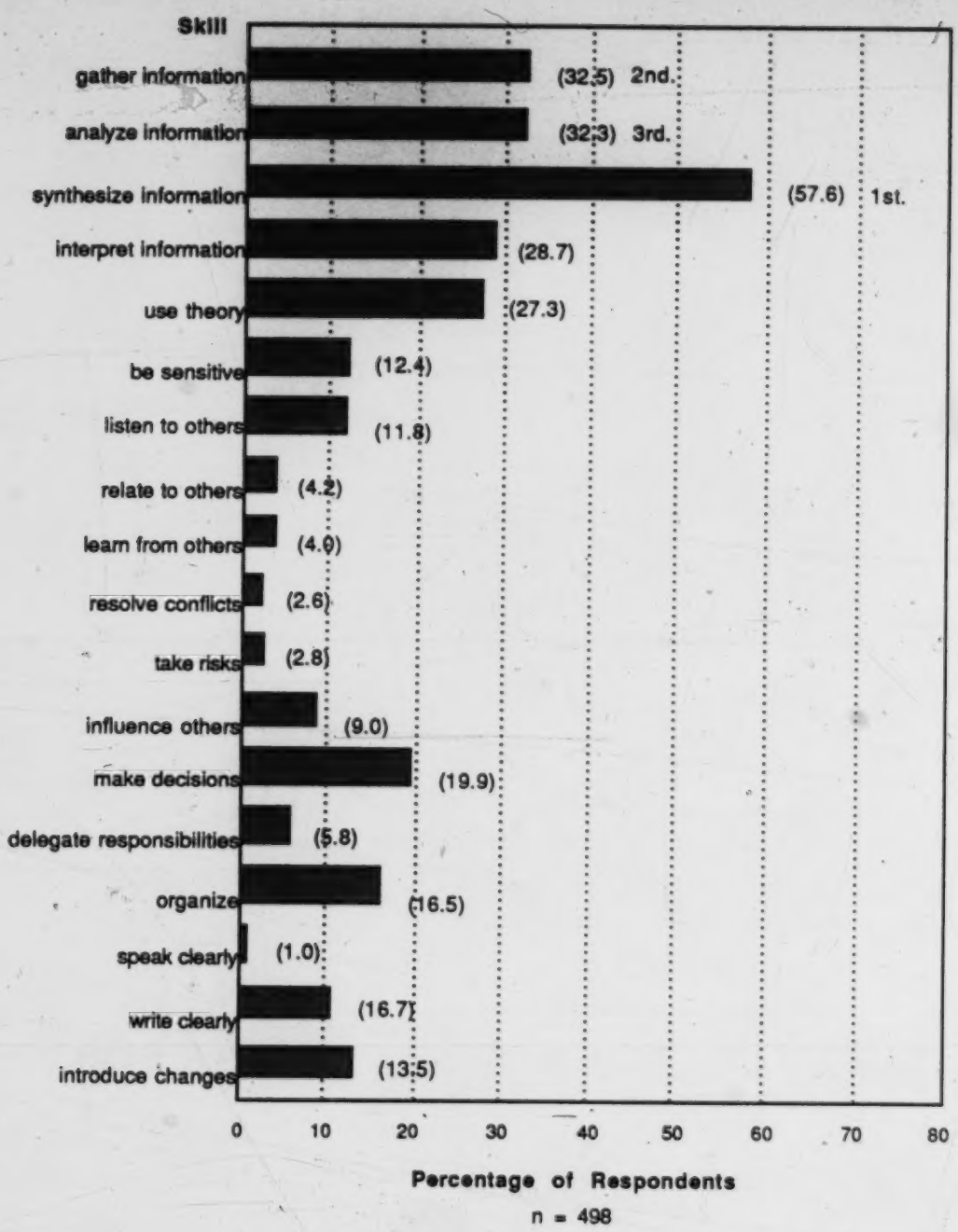

Figure 6

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Developing Policies

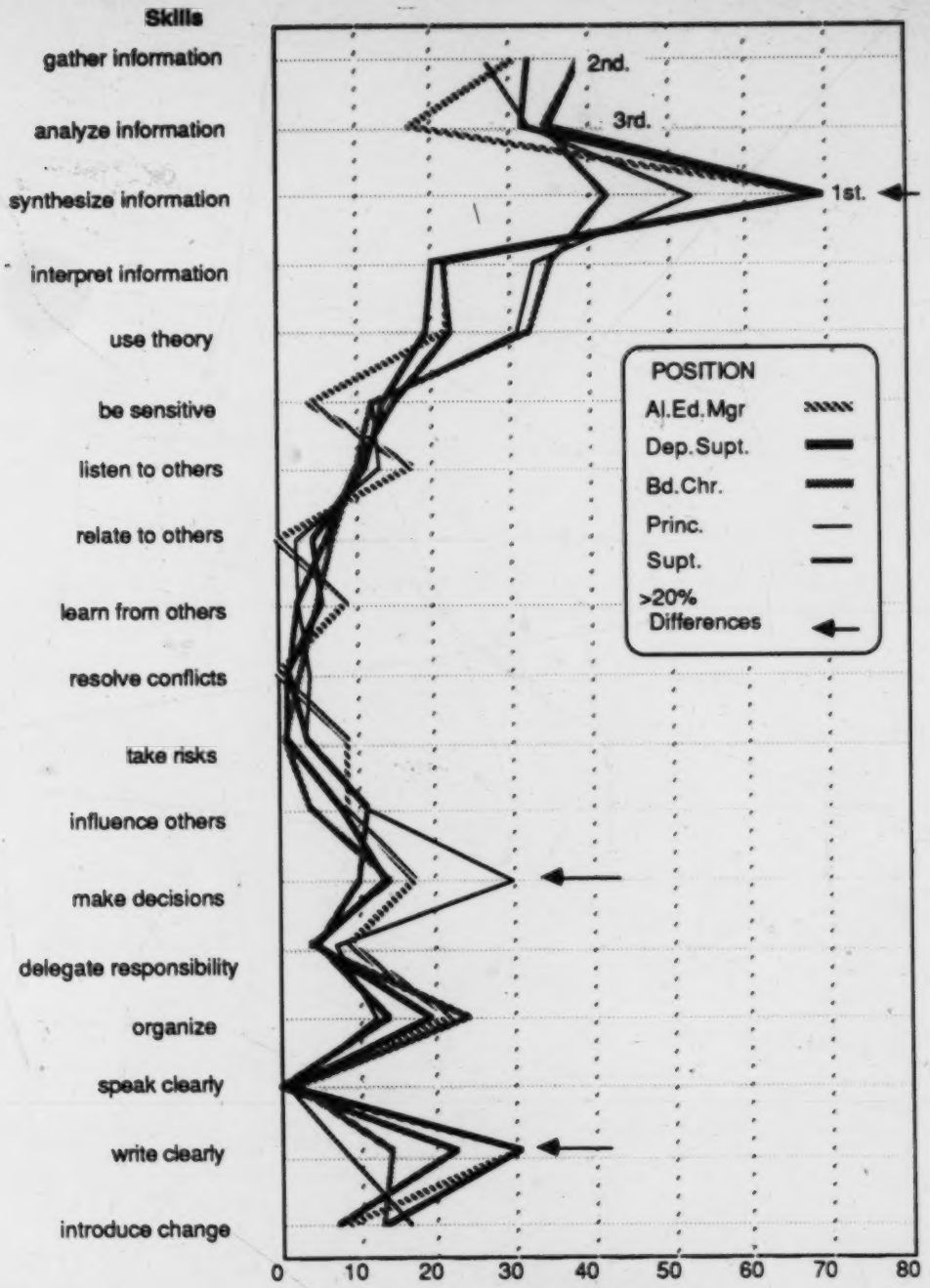

Figure 7

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policies

importance of the skills to different respondent subgroups. Although all the subgroups identified synthesizing information as the most important skill, Chairmen and Principals had lower expectations for this skill than did Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents and Superintendents.

Evaluation. As resported in Figure 8, the skills that were most important to the Evaluation task area were, interpreting information, gathering information and analyzing information. Interpreting information was selected by 43.9% of respondents, gathering information was selected by 39.8% of respondents and analyzing information was selected by 33.4% of respondents.

The Figure 9 position subgroup profiles reveal the different degrees of skills expectations for the Evaluation task area. For the third most important skill of analyzing information, Alberta Education Managers and Principals held lower expectations than did Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents and Chairmen, whose expectations clustered at a higher degree of importance.

Working with trustees. For the Working With Trustees task area, information skills were considered to be most important; the Figure 10 profile shows synthesizing information first, interpreting information second and analyzing information third in importance. These information skills were selected by 47.9%, 44.5% and 28.9% of respondents respectively.

The position subgroup profiles of Figure 11 reveal that

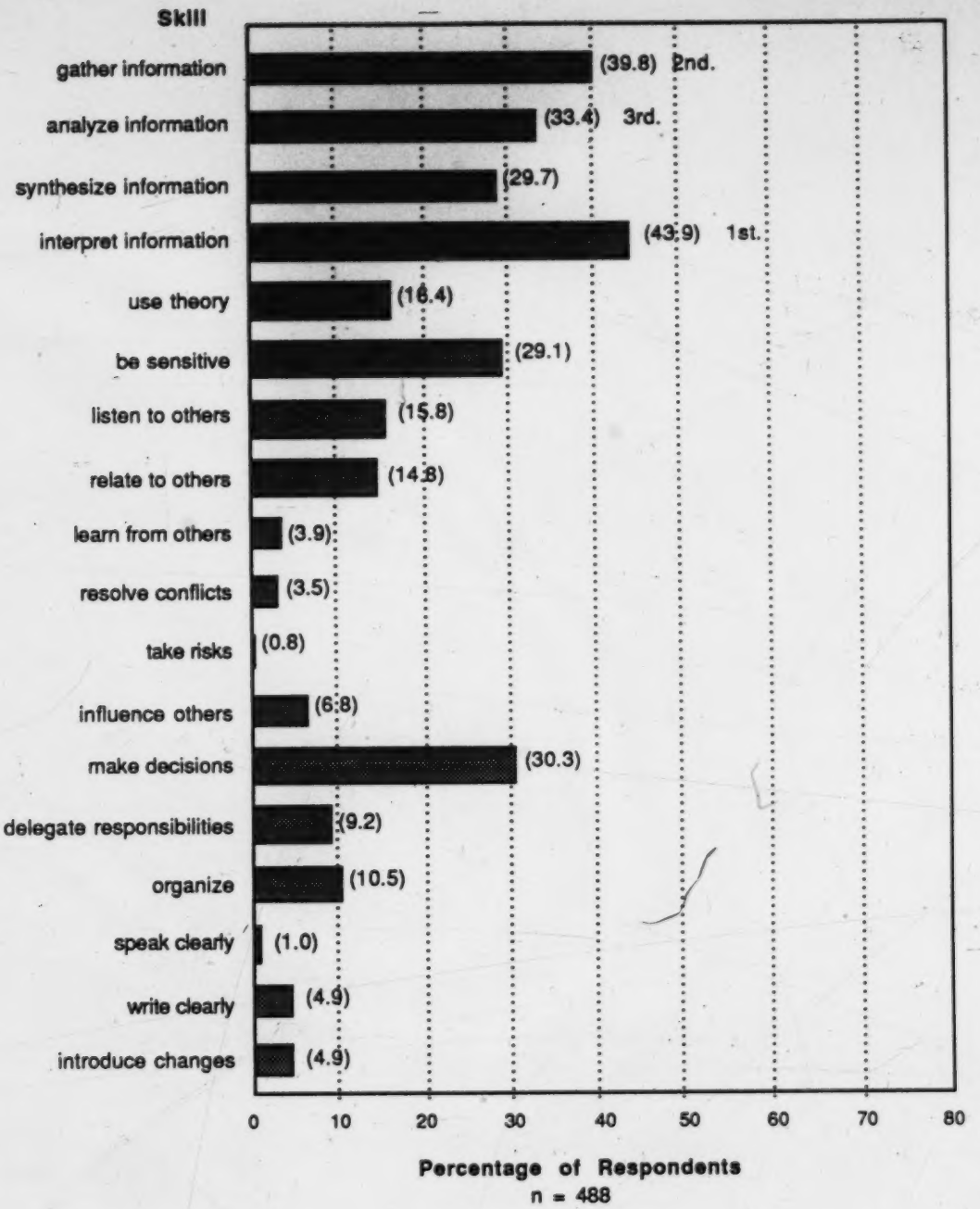

Figure 8

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities

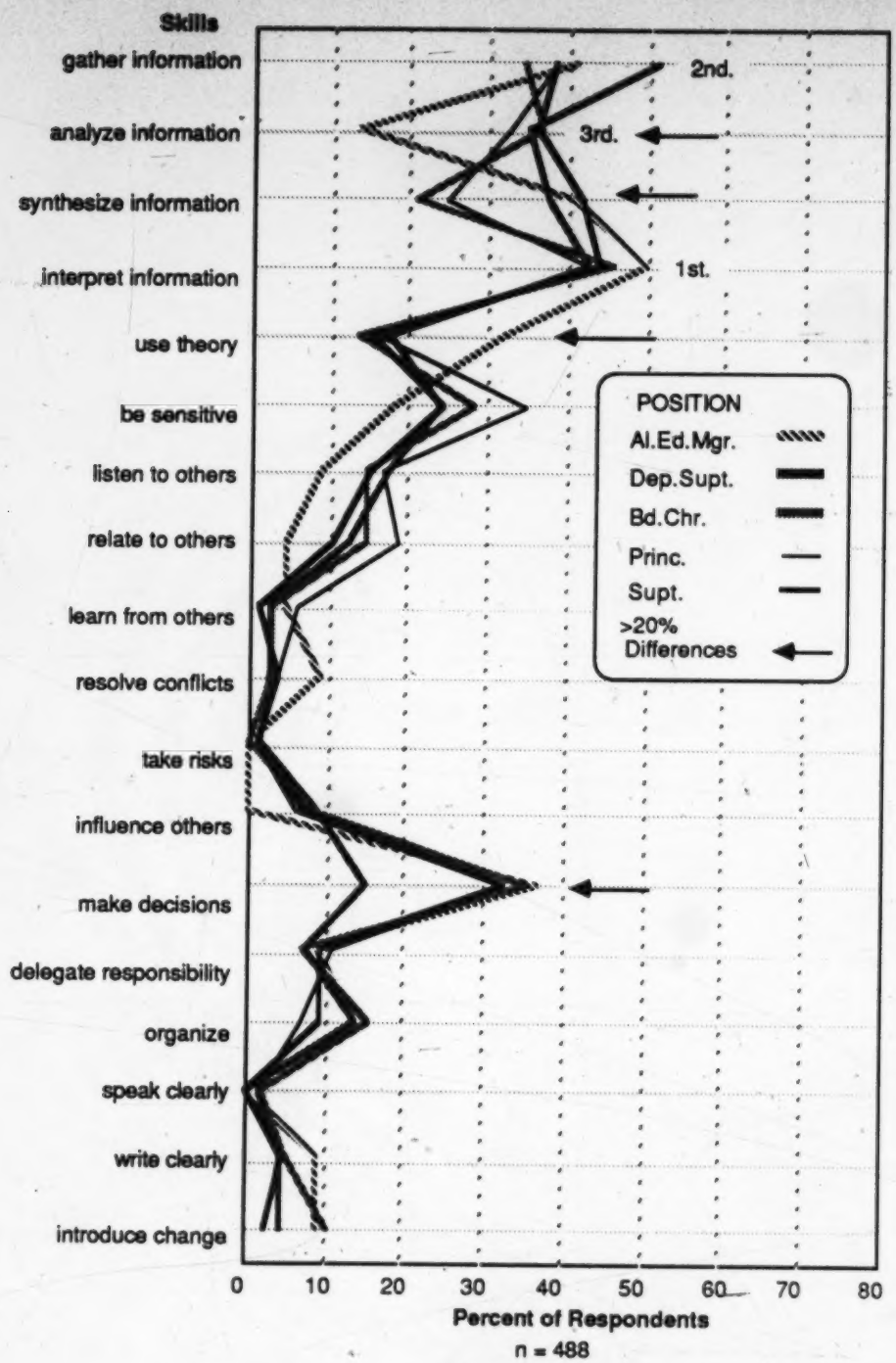

Figure 9

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities

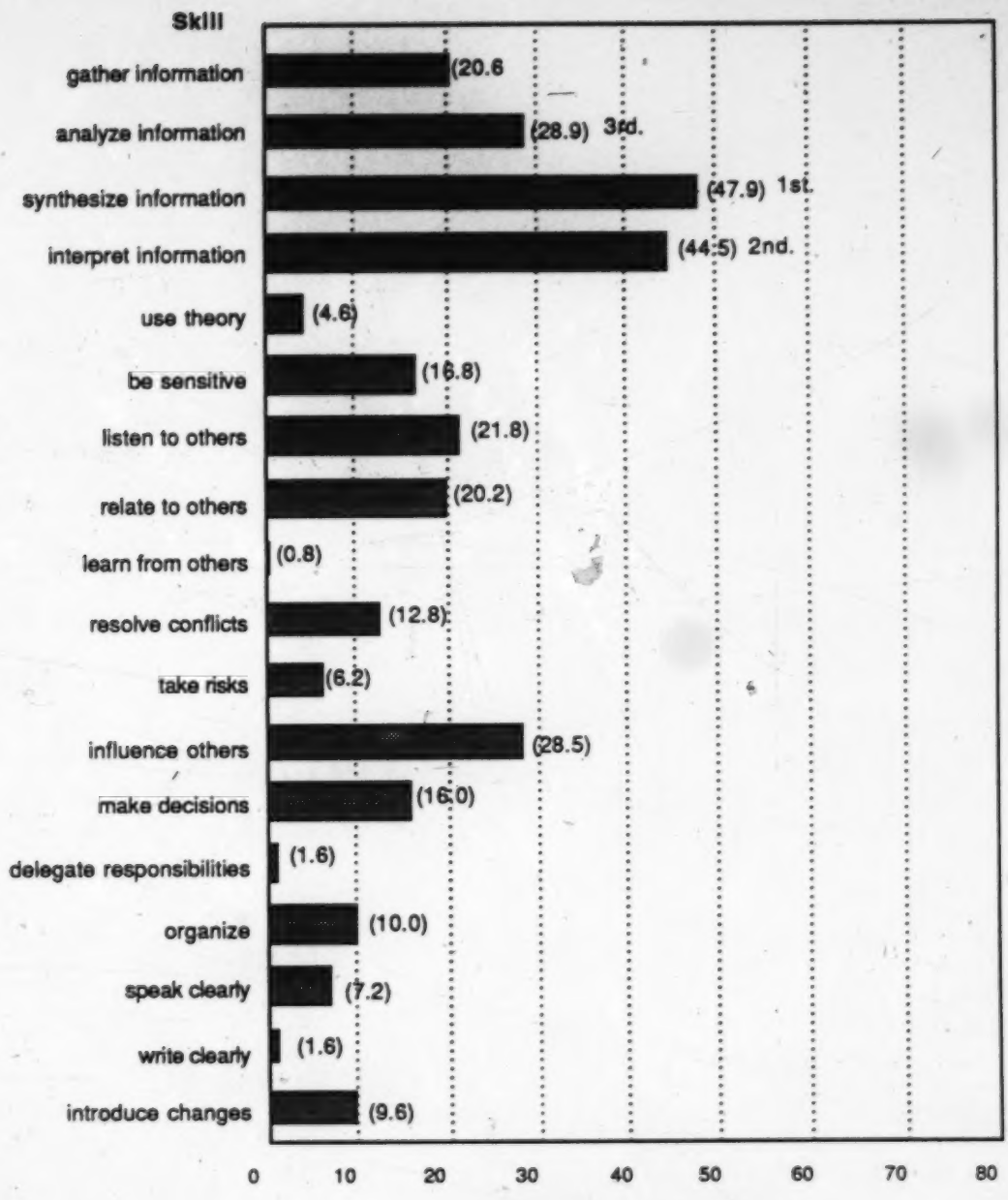

Figure 10

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees

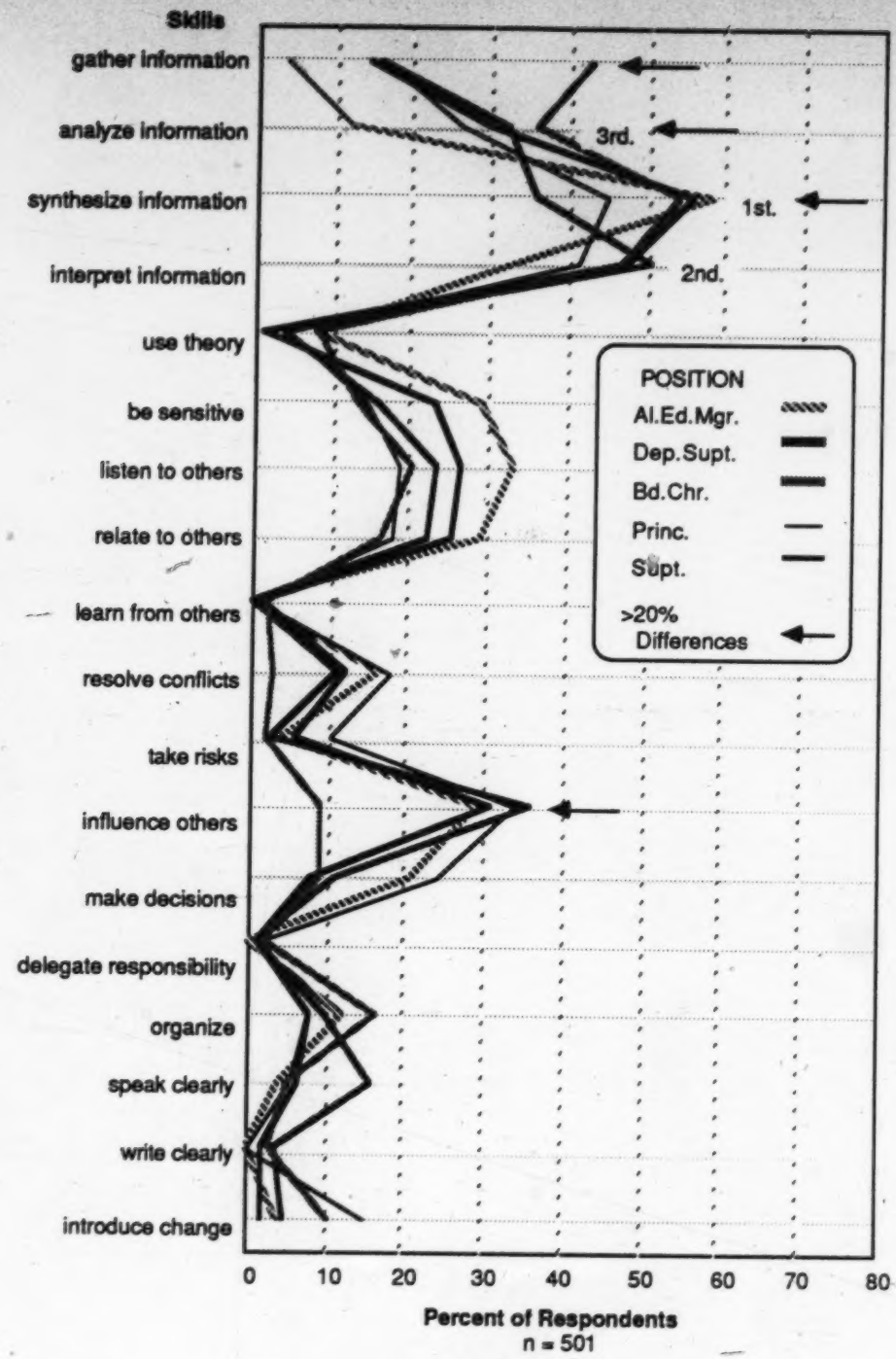

Figure 11

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees

perceptions vary regarding the degrees of importance of the above skills. For the most important synthesizing information skill, there was a grouping together of perceptions of Alberta Education Managers, Superintendents and Chairmen at a higher level of importance than perceptions of Principals and Deputy Superintendents who gave less importance to this skill. Analyzing information, which was the third most important skill, was considered to be least important by Alberta Education Managers, and most important by Chairmen, in comparison to perceptions of Deputy Superintendents, Principals and Superintendents, whose perceptions grouped together at a medium level of importance.

Public relations. Public Relations was the fourth most important task area and relating to others was considered to be the most important skill in this task area. Figure 12 shows that relating to others was selected by 47.9% of respondents. Speaking clearly, and listening were second and third, being chosen by 42.8%, and 39.8% of respondents.

In a position subgroup comparison, it was for the second most important skill of speaking clearly that there were differences in expectations for superintendents. Figure 13 shows that Alberta Education Managers considered speaking clearly to be the most important skill, and furthermore, their perceived importance was much higher than other respondent groups.

Managing staff. First and foremost a superintendent needed to be sensitive when managing staff according to 65.9% of respondents. Figure

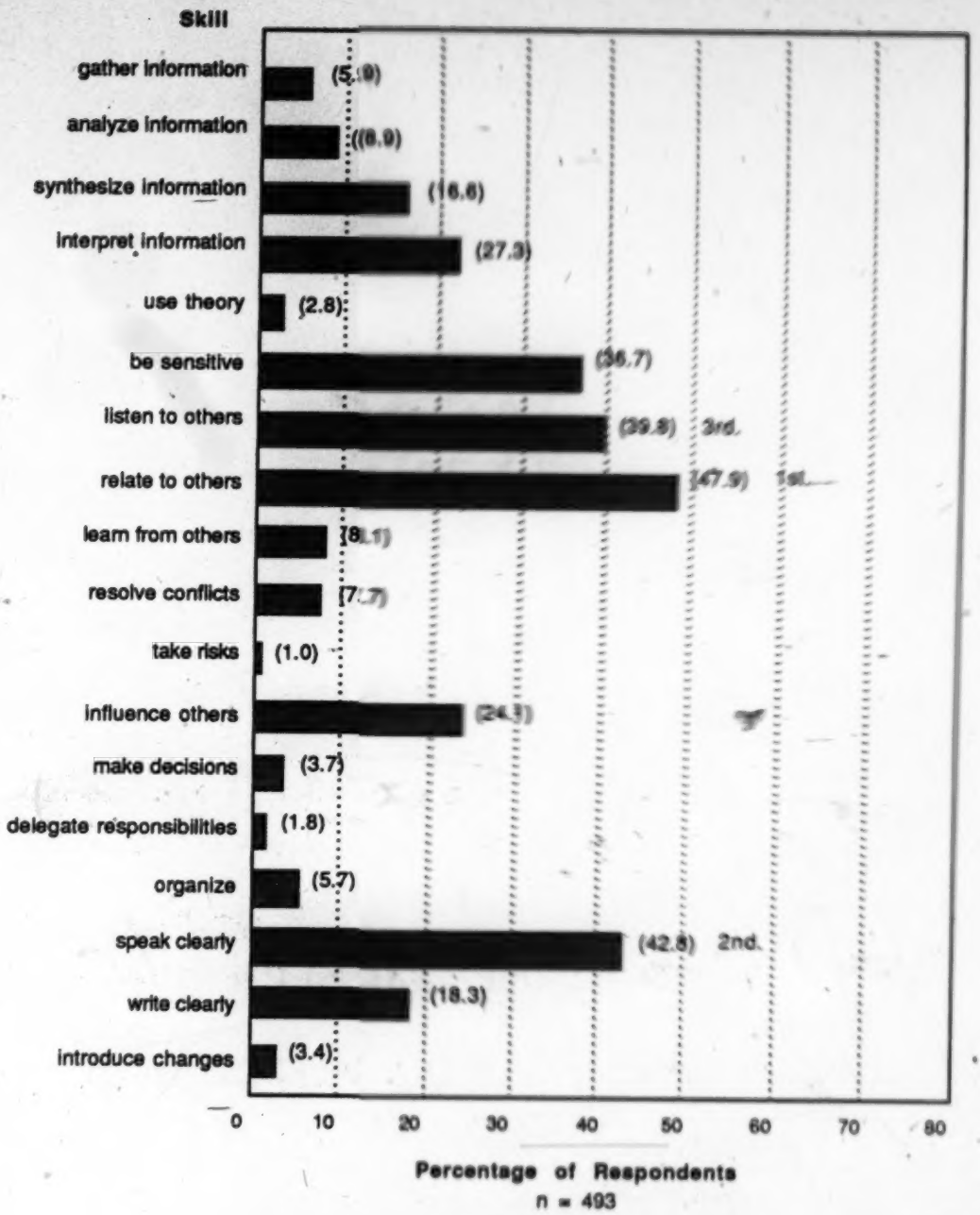

Figure 12

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities

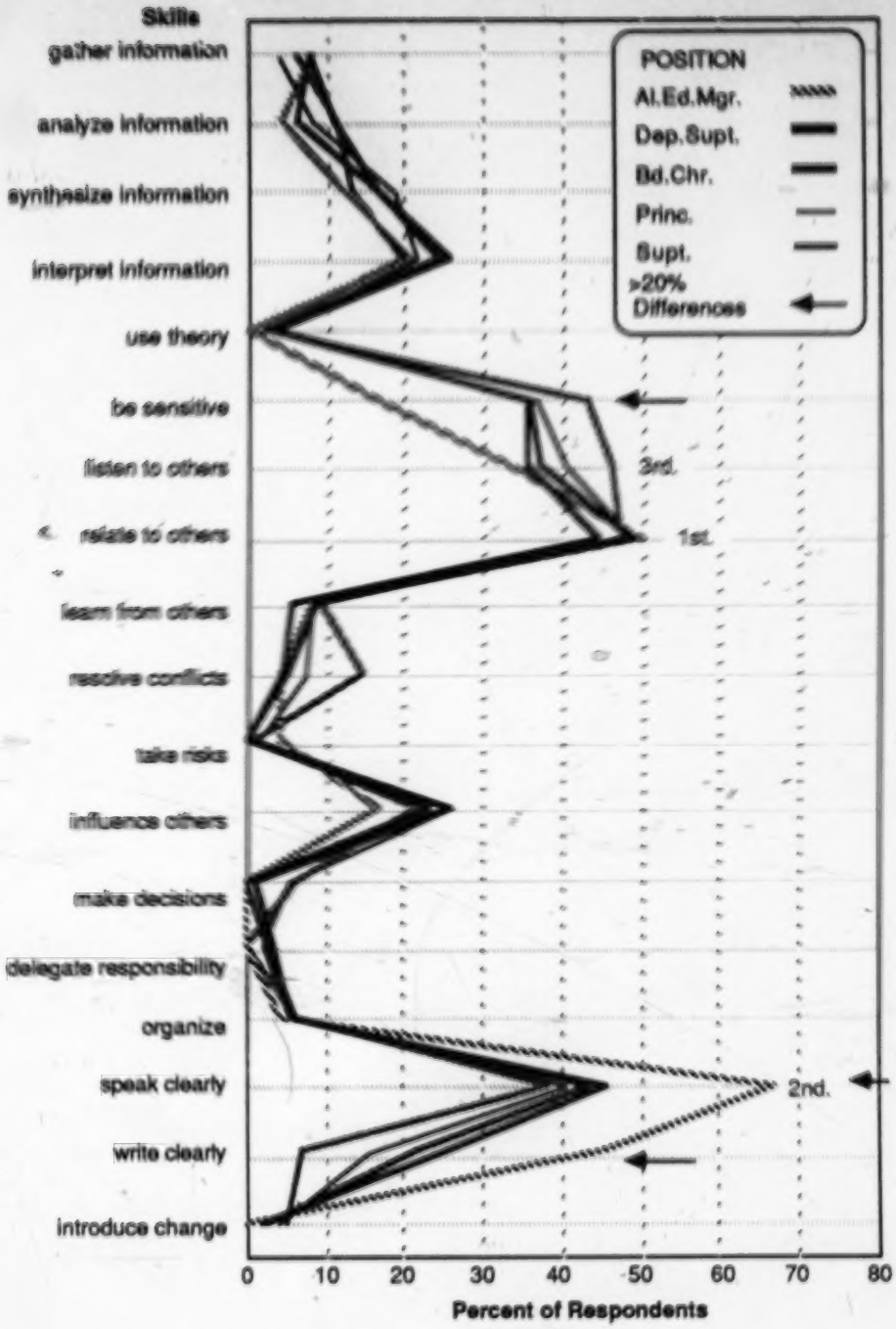

Figure 13

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities

14 also shows that a superintendent needs skills in relating to others and listening to others. These latter two skills were chosen by 51.6% and 40.6% of respondents.

There were more than twenty percent differences among position subgroups for the three top skills. For being sensitive, Figure 15 shows Superintendents ascribing medium importance to the skill in comparison to higher importance by Principals and Chairmen, and lower importance by Alberta Education Managers. Relating to others was a skill that was considered to be most important by Alberta Education Managers, of medium importance to Principals, Deputy Superintendents and Superintendents, and of lowest importance to Board Chairmen. The differences among subgroups were largest for the skill of listening to others. The degrees of importance, from highest to lowest, were, Principals, Deputy Superintendents, Superintendents, Chairmen and Alberta Education Managers.

Business management. According to 54.3% of respondents, delegating responsibilities was the most important skill when a superintendent was coordinating the management of central office and system administration, budgeting and accounting procedures. Figure 16 also reveals that 46.5% of respondents believe the superintendents require decision-making skills, and that 35.7% believe superintendents require organizing skills.

The position subgroup profiles shown in Figure 17 are similar for all respondent subgroups except for one skill. Alberta Education Managers thought that delegating responsibilities was a more important

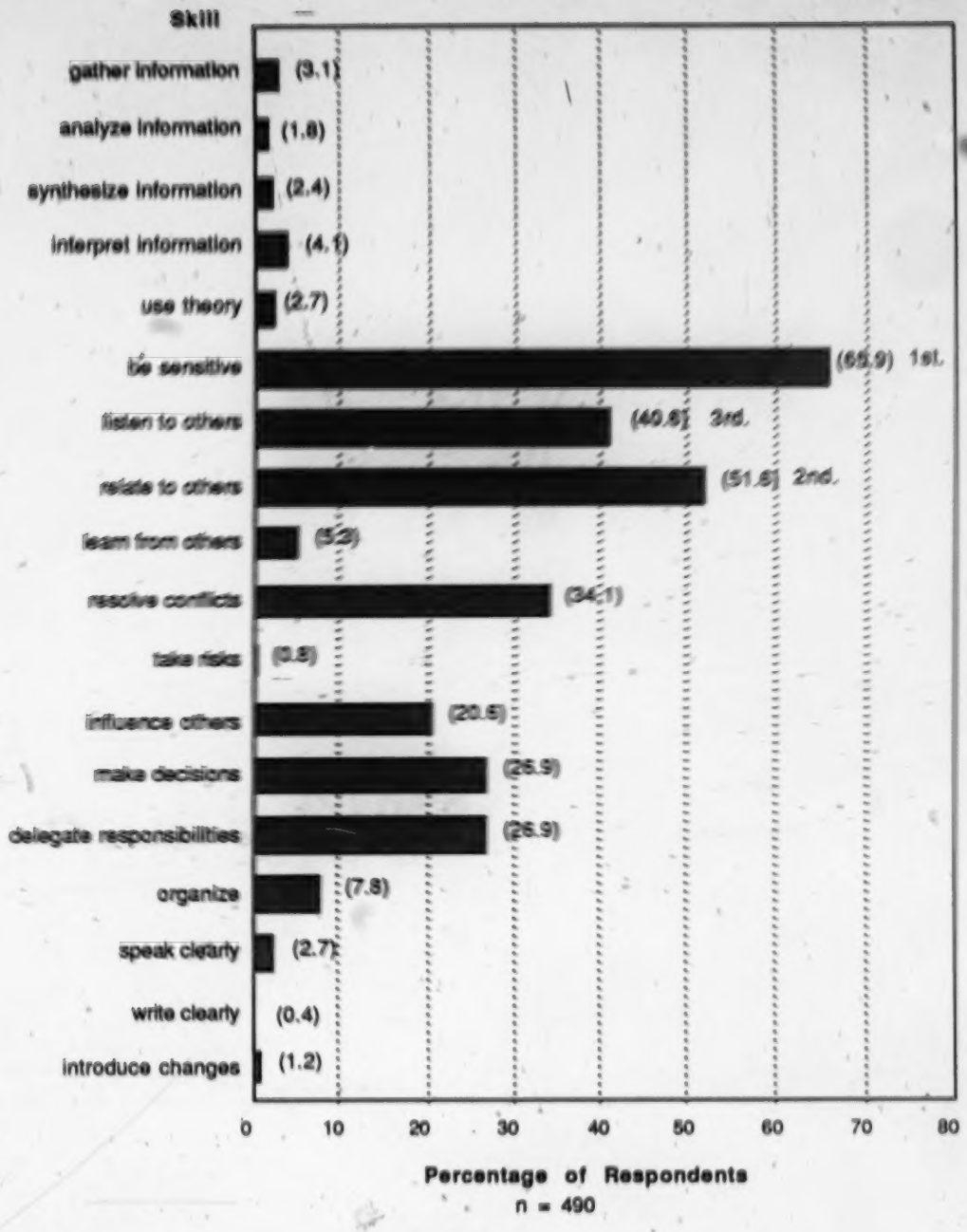

Figure 14

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Managing Staff

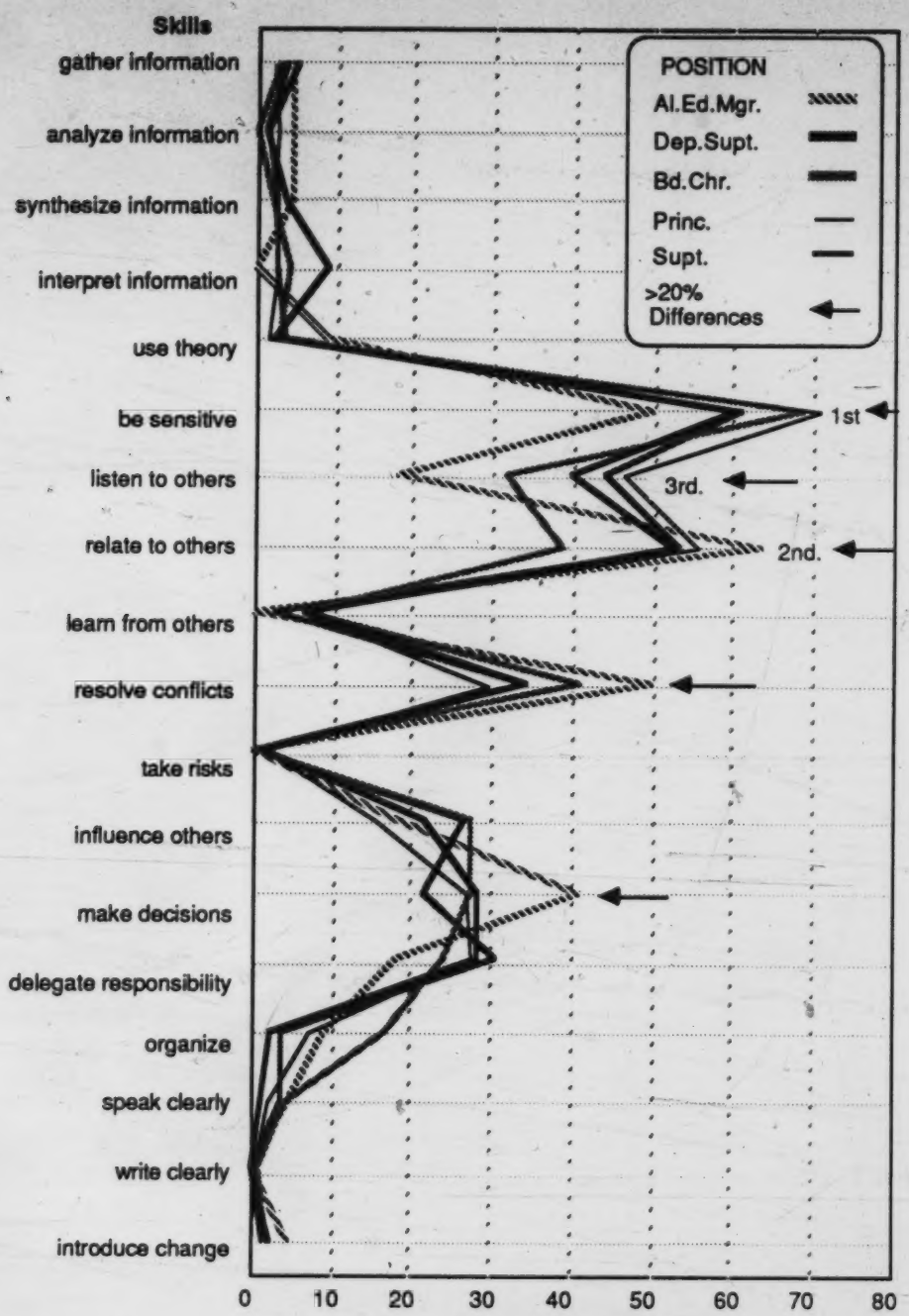

Figure 15

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff

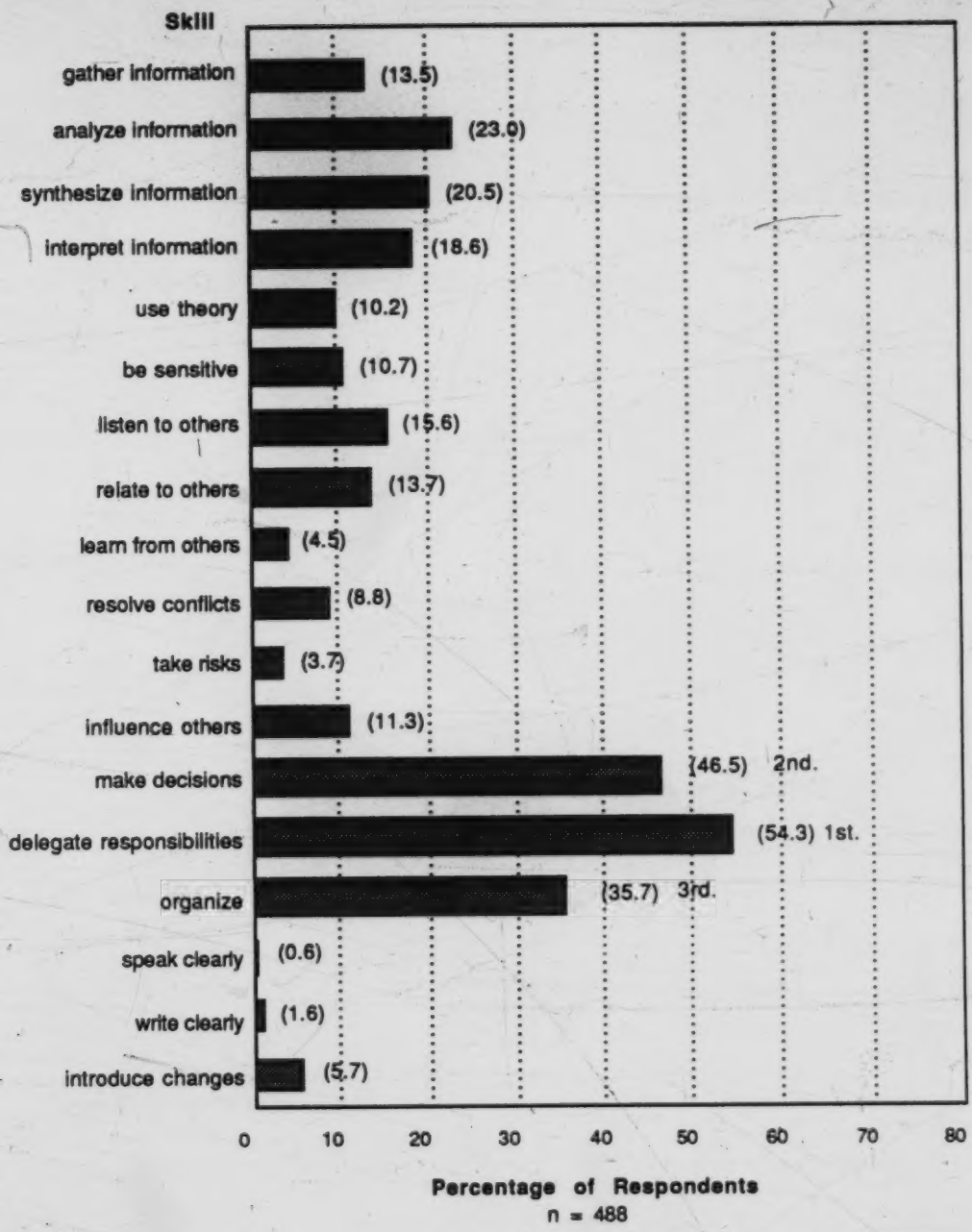

Figure 16

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities

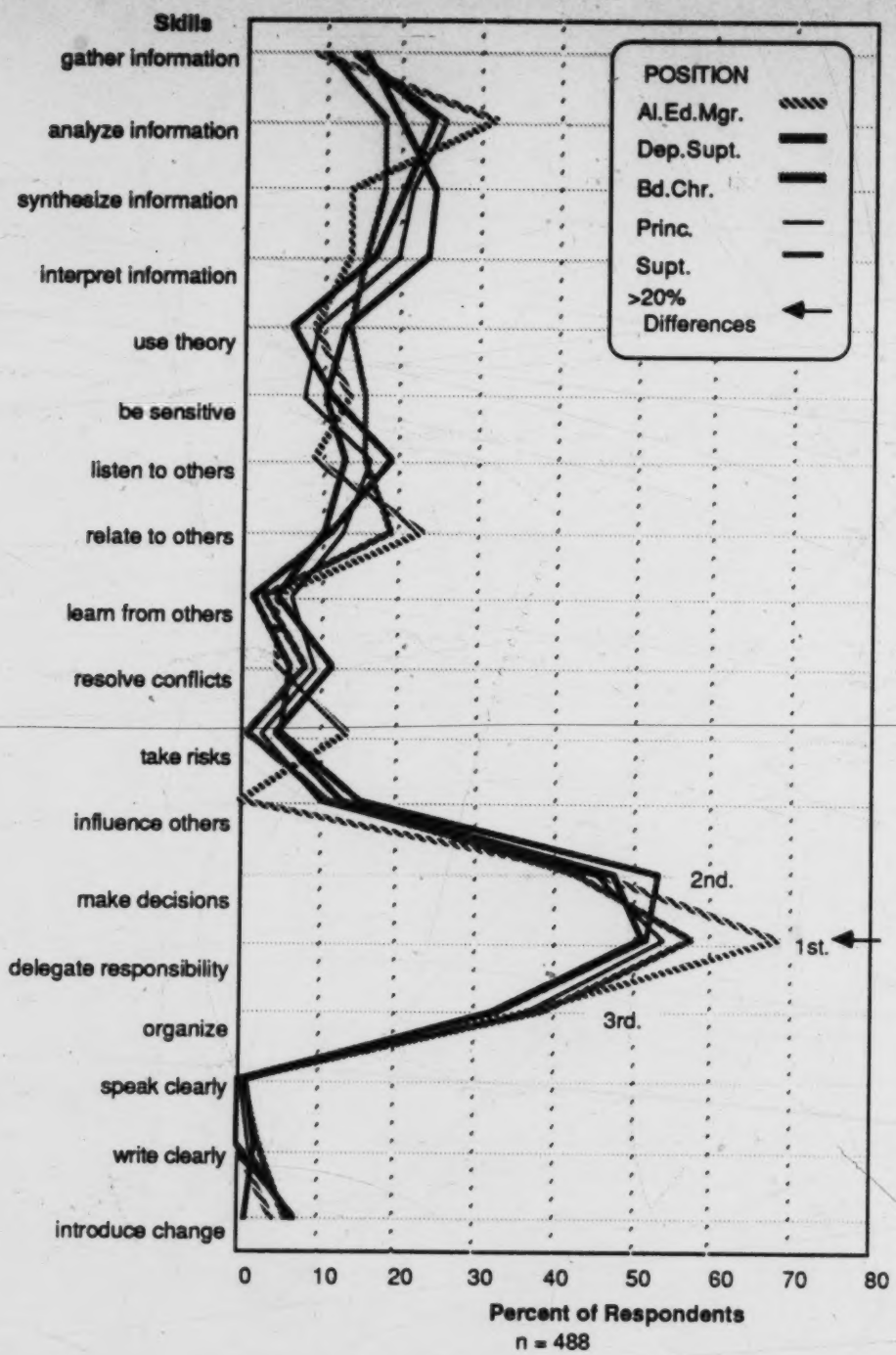

Figure 17

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities

skill than did other respondent subgroups.

School programs. As revealed in Figure 18, using theory (44.5%), delegating responsibilities (31.3%) and synthesizing information (29.3%) were perceived to be the most important school program skills.

The skills profiles in Figure 19 identify two of the above skills where there were recognizable differences in the position subgroups' expectations. Superintendents placed more importance on using theory in comparison to lesser degree of importance of the other subgroups. The degrees of importance also varied for delegating responsibility. Superintendents ascribed medium level importance, Alberta Education Managers and Deputy Superintendents higher levels of importance, Chairmen and Principals lower levels of importance to delegating responsibility.

School facilities. School Facilities was the second task area where the skill of delegating responsibilities was considered to be first in importance. Figure 20 shows that this skill was considered to be first in importance by 66% of respondents. Making decisions and organizing were second (40.9%) and third (28%) in importance.

The position subgroup profiles displayed in Figure 21 show consistency among the subgroups regarding the degrees of importance of skills needed by superintendents to work in the School Facilities task area. For example, all subgroups agreed that delegating responsibilities was the most important skill, and furthermore, the subgroups showed close agreement as to the degree of importance that

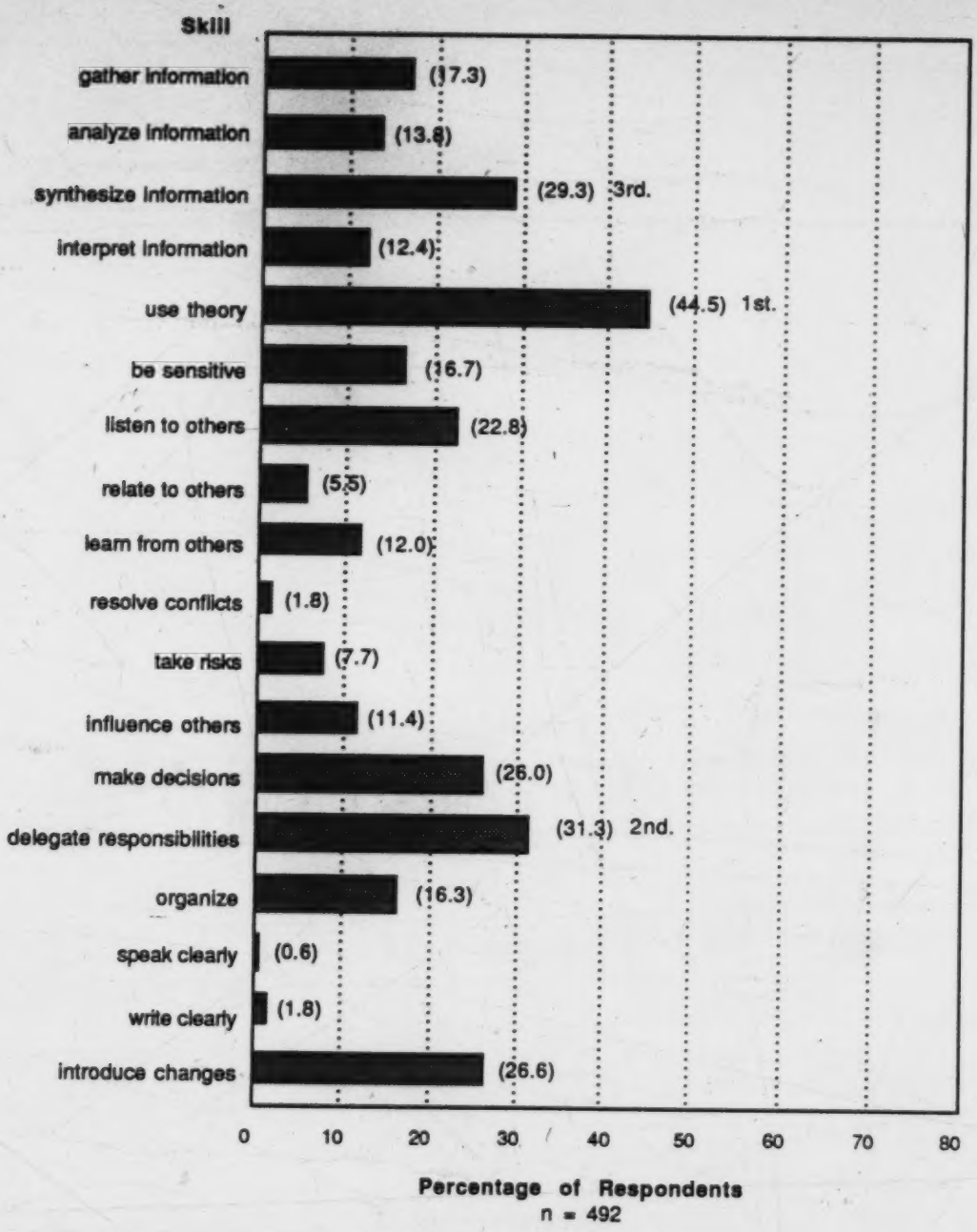

Figure 18

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs

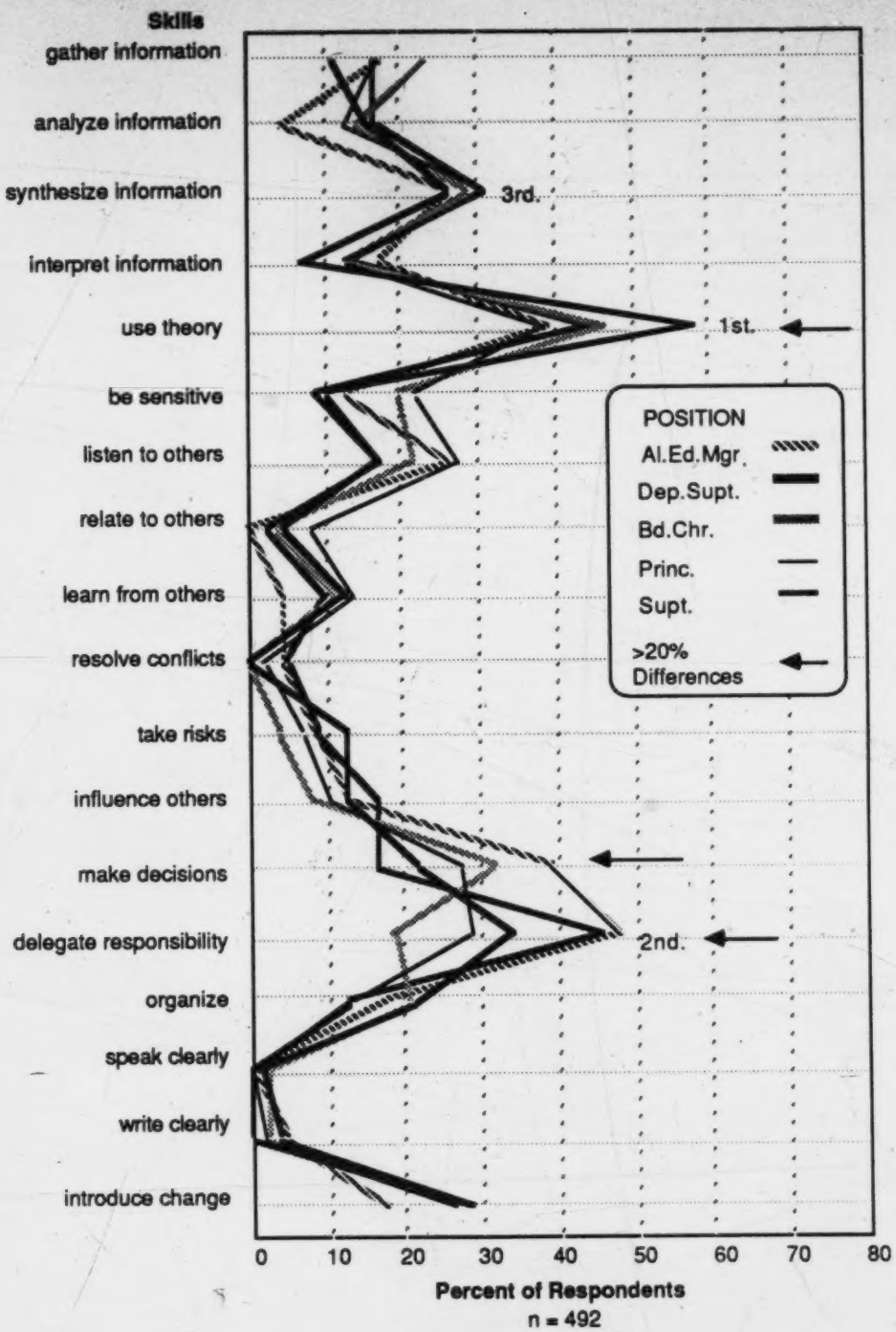

Figure 19

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs

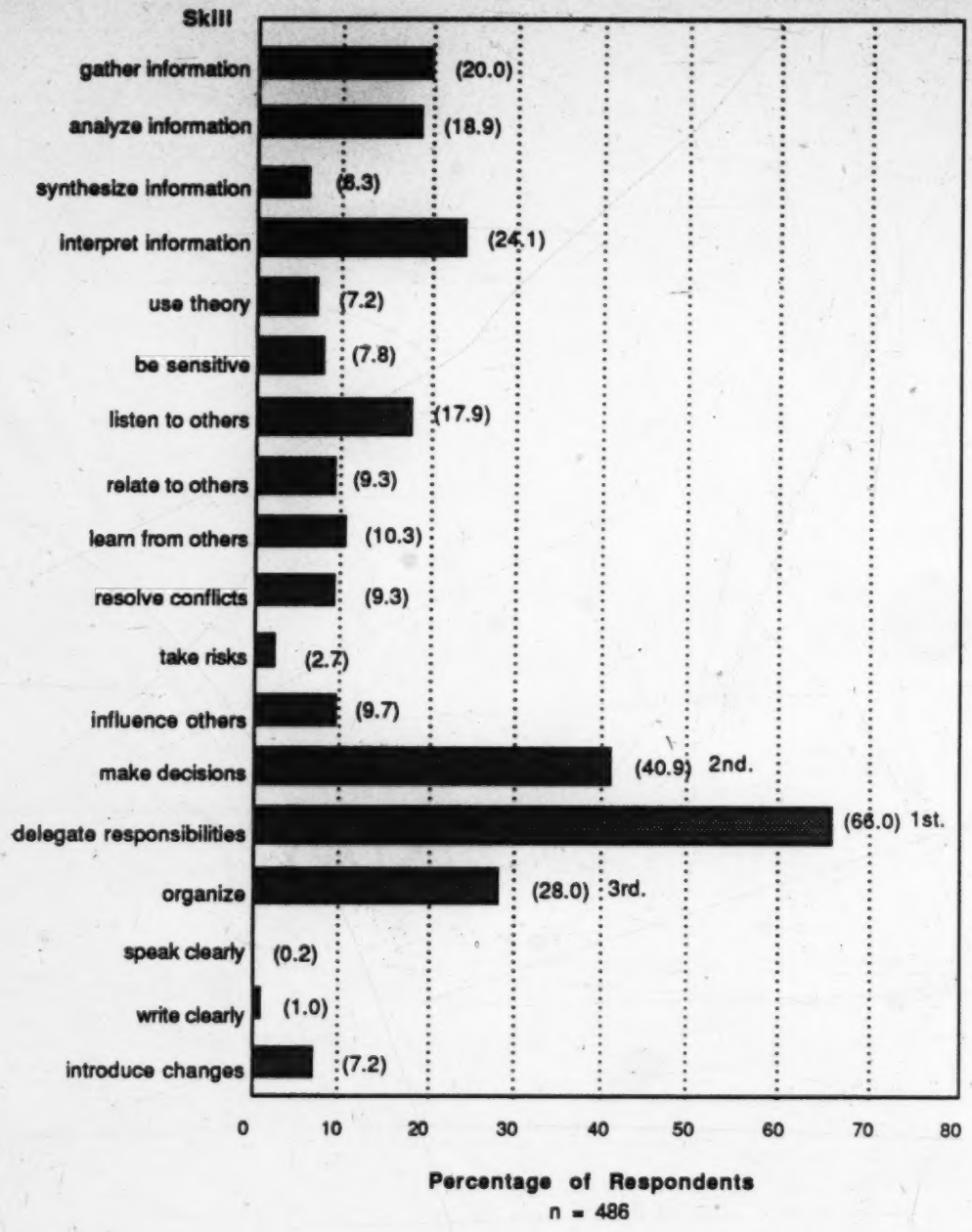

Figure 20

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities

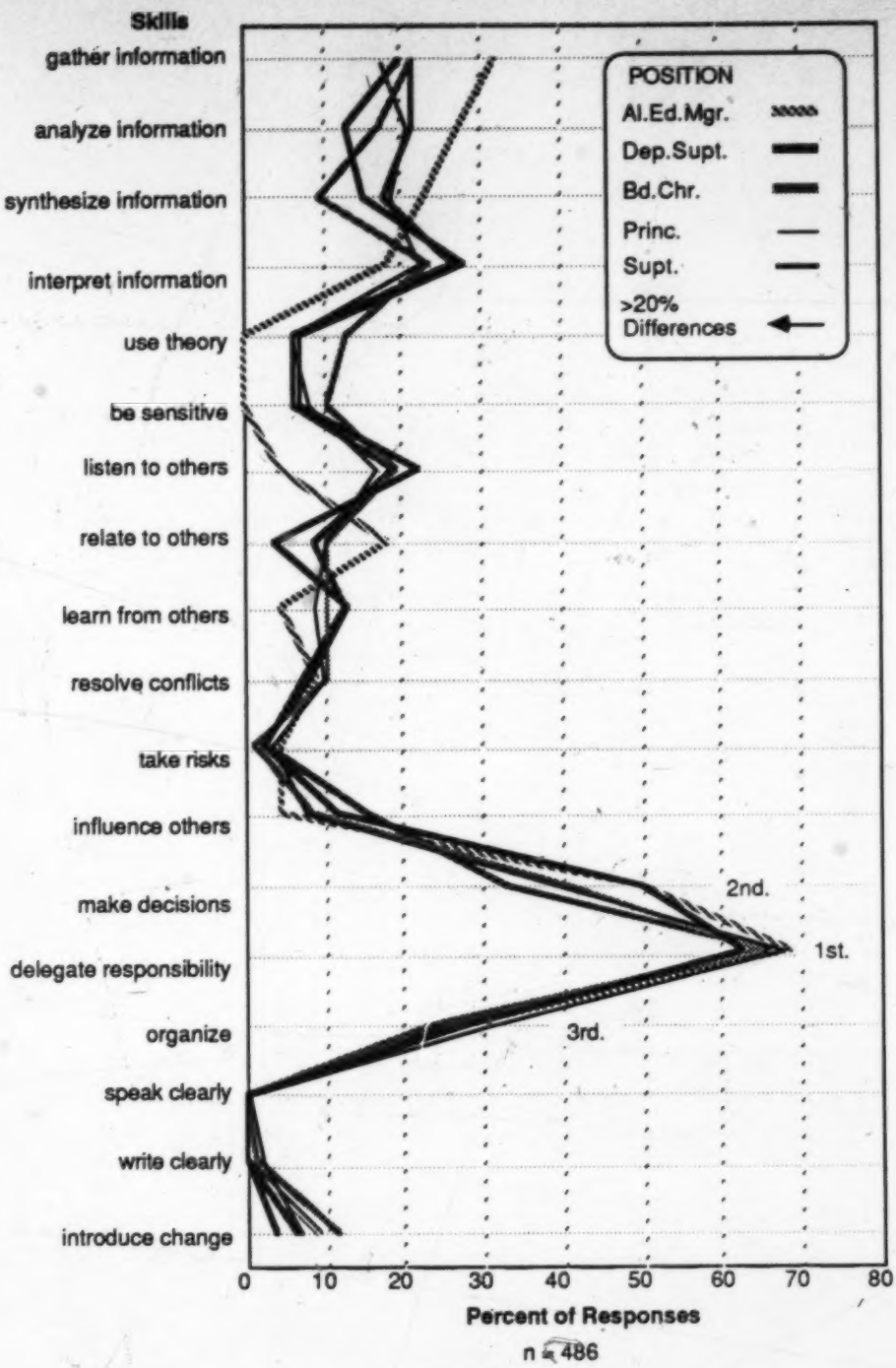

Figure 21

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities

should be attributed to the delegating responsibilities skill. A similar close agreement was displayed for the second most important skill, making decisions, and the third most important skill, organizing.

Student services. Student services was a third task area where delegating responsibilities was the most important skill as shown in Figure 22. A total of 53.3% of respondents selected delegating responsibilities as a skill requirement. Second and third in importance were the need to be sensitive (47.5%) and the need to make decisions (26.4%).

The Figure 23 subgroup profiles show that there was only one skill out of the top three skills where there was a greater than twenty percent difference. This was for the third most important skill of making decisions. Alberta Education Managers showed a much higher expectation for superintendents making decisions in Student Services than other respondent subgroups; the other subgroup responses for making decisions clustered together at a much lower level than did the Alberta Education manager responses.

Transportation. Figure 24 shows that Transportation was a fourth task area where delegating responsibilities, selected by 67.2% of respondents, was considered to be the most important skill. Making decisions, the second most important skill, was selected by 34.9% of respondents. Organizing was selected by 26.6% of respondents to become the third most important skill for a superintendent working in the

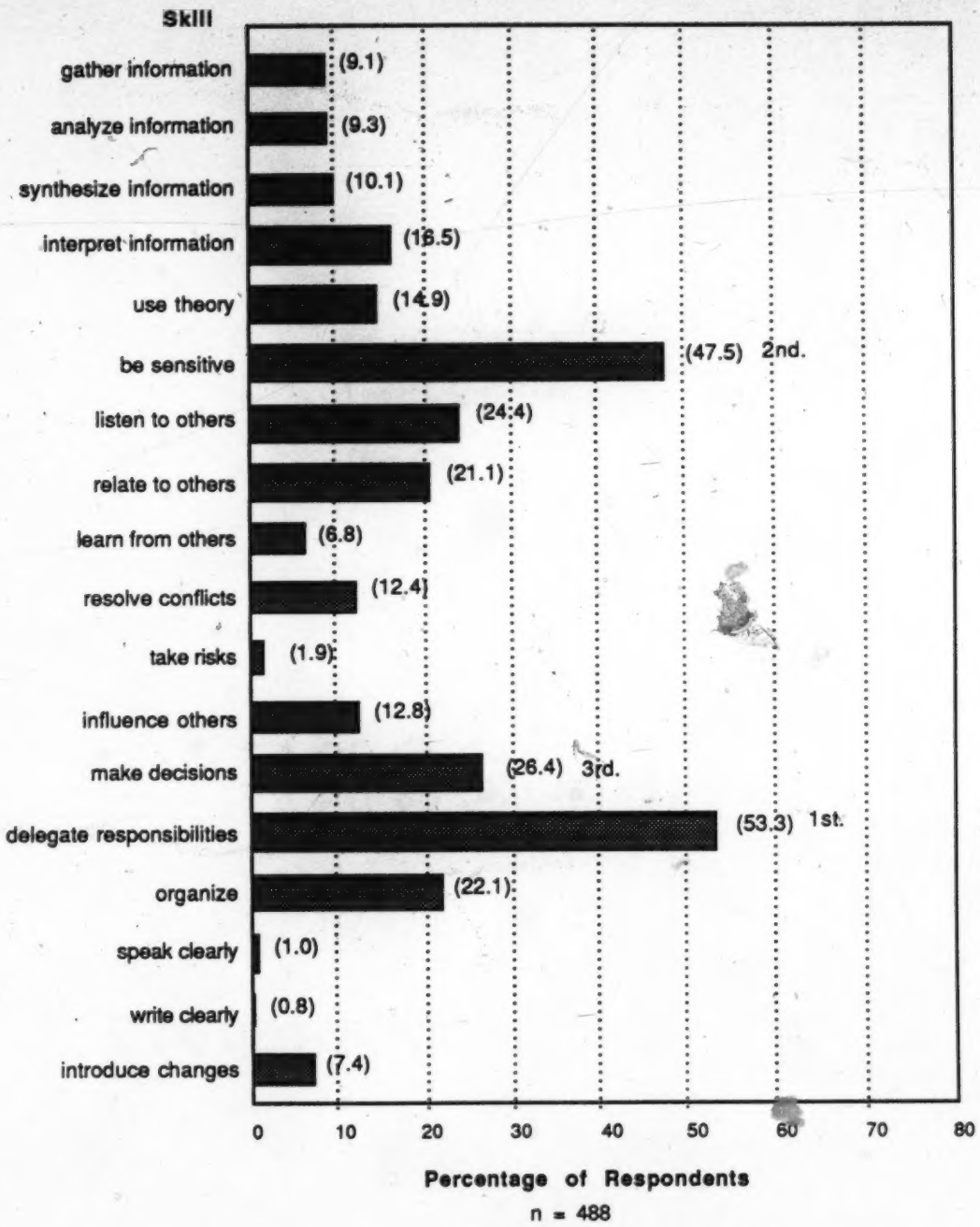

Figure 22

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services

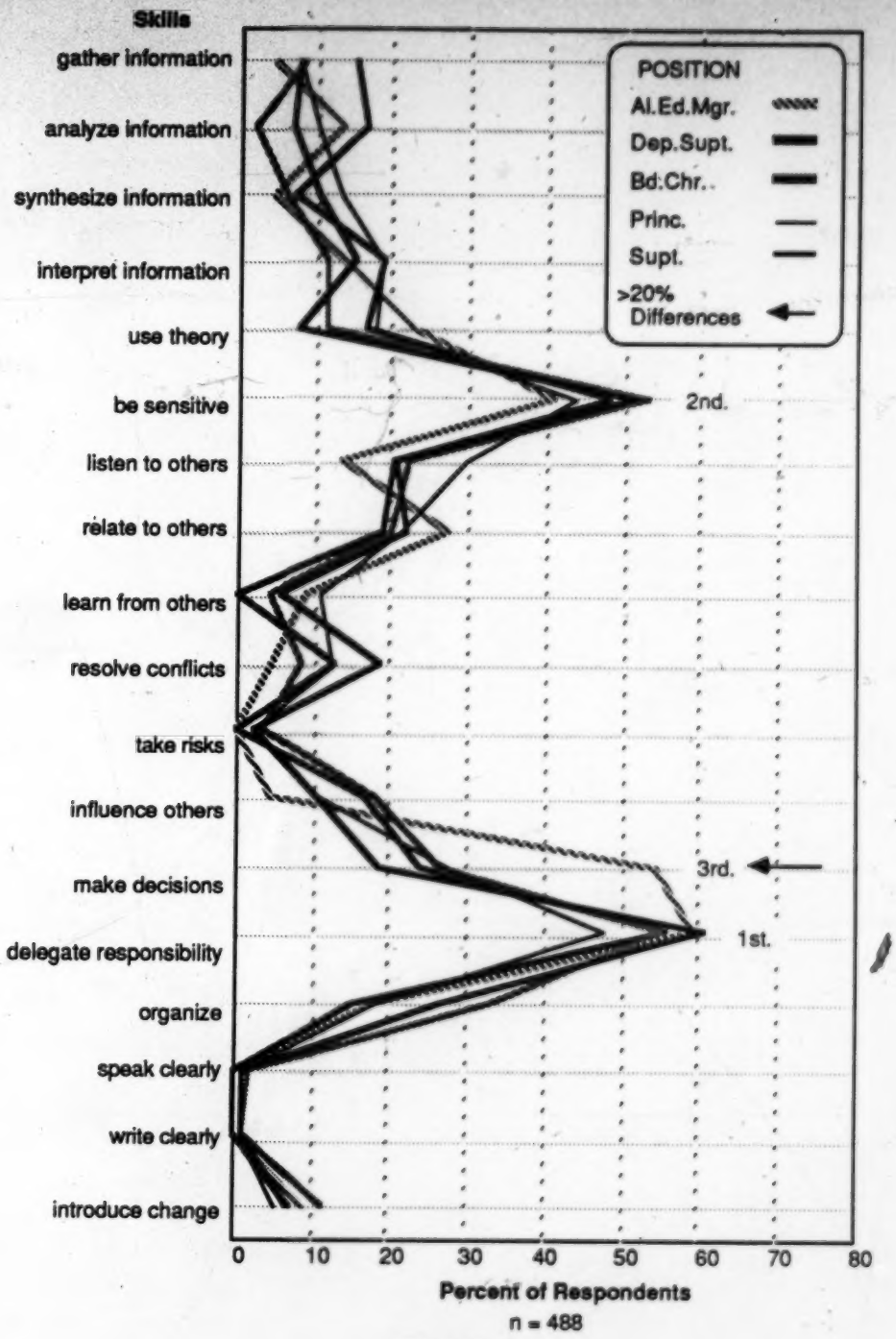

Figure 23

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services

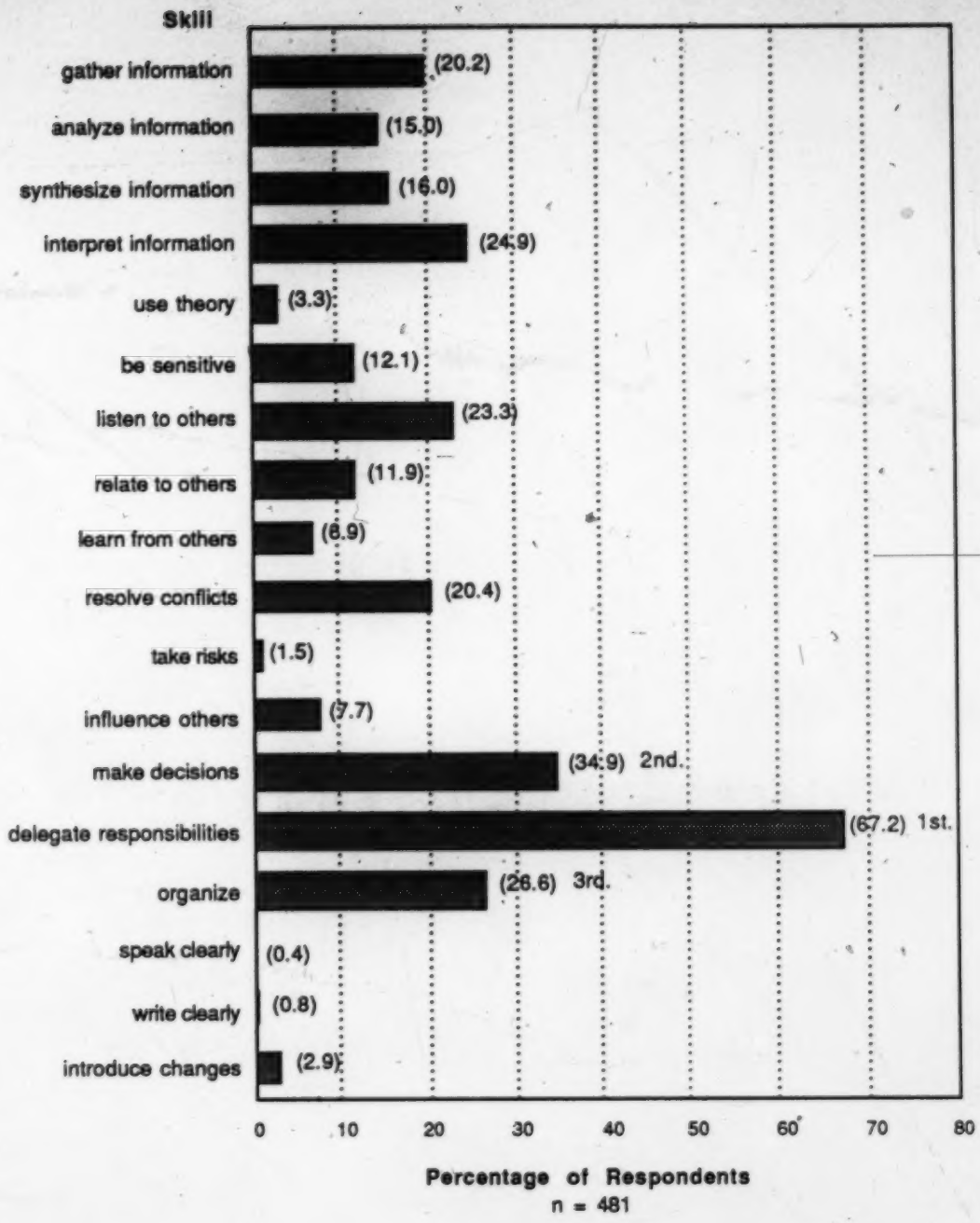

Figure 24

Total Sample Profile of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities

Transportation task area.

Transportation was yet another area of similar position subgroup profiles. Figure 25 shows that there was close subgroup agreement concerning the three most important skills of delegating responsibility, making decisions, and organizing. There were two differences of greater than twenty percent, but these involved skills that were considered to be of lesser importance.

Summary. To summarize, there appeared to be a pattern of different skills being emphasized in different task areas. Some skills were selected more often than others. Delegating responsibilities was selected most frequently as one of the top three skills for five task areas: Business Management, School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Transportation. Making decisions was selected in the top three skills four times in each of Business Management, School Facilities, Student Services and Transportation task areas. Information skills were considered to be most important in Policy Development, Evaluation and Working With Trustees task areas, where gathering information, interpreting information, synthesizing information and analyzing information made up the top three selected skills. People skills seemed to be most important in Public Relations and Managing Staff task areas, with relating to others and listening to others being selected for both of these task areas.

Position occupied by respondents seemed to be a contingency factor that influenced expectations of the importance of different skills. The subgroups generally agreed as to the rank of importance of the skills,

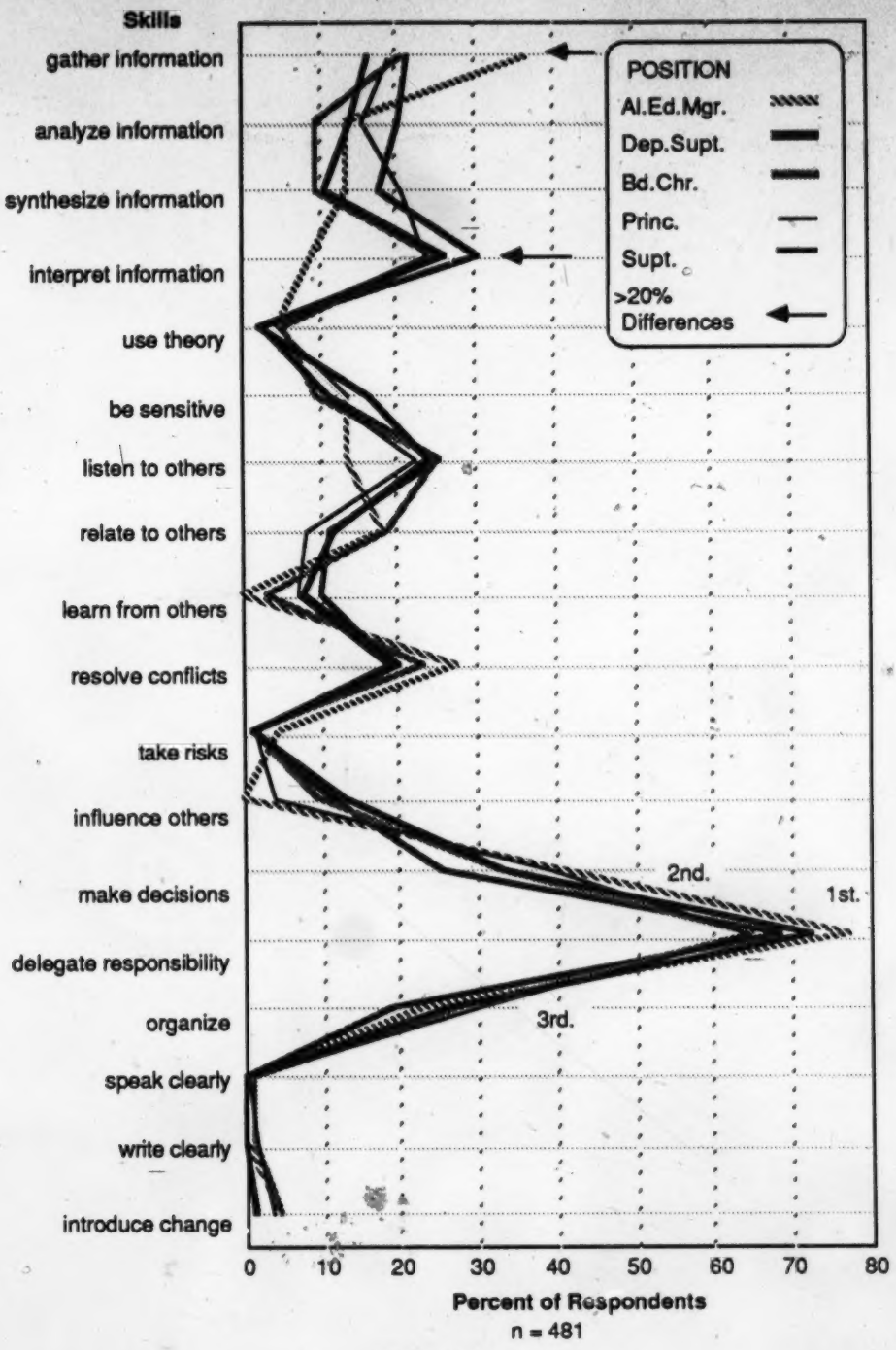

Figure 25

Position Profiles of Skills Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities

but there were differences among the subgroups in degrees of importance of each skill.

Characteristics of Superintendents

The third major research question was: "What personal characteristics are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?" Respondents were asked to select from a list of fifteen characteristics, the first, second and third most important characteristics a superintendent should have, as well as the first, second and third characteristics most desirable for each task area. The frequencies for first, second and third choices were collapsed and then converted to percentages of respondents selecting each characteristic.

Overall Characteristics Expectations

This section presents the findings related to the subquestion: "What personal characteristics are most important in the overall work of a superintendent?" The Figure 26 profile shows the levels of importance of the various characteristics in the work of a superintendent. Trustworthiness, selected by 63.7% of respondents, was the most important characteristic. Figure 26 also reveals that consistency and intelligence were second and third in importance as general desired qualities of a superintendent. Caring, approachability, and adaptability were considered to be qualities in a mid range of importance. Of lower importance, but still important, were the following personal characteristics: creativity, confidence, enthusiasm,

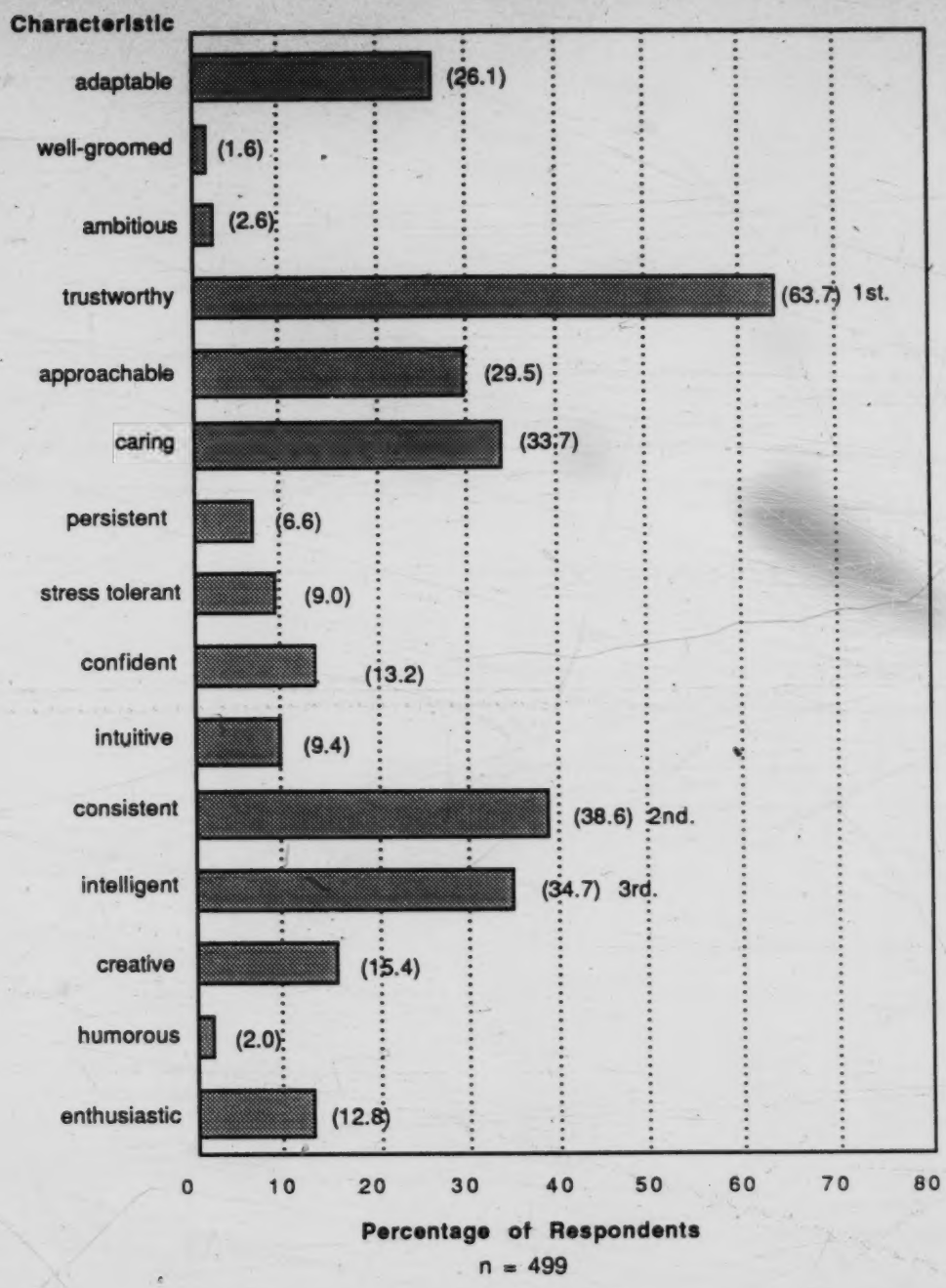

Figure 26

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

intuition, stress tolerance and persistence. Ambition, humor and being well-groomed were considered to be least important.

A pattern illustrated in the above findings is that trustworthy was by far the most important characteristic, since it was selected by approximately two-thirds of the respondents. Consistency, intelligence and caring were each selected by approximately one-third of respondents and were a second group of important characteristics. The other characteristics were of lesser importance with below 30% selection rates.

Influence of Contingency Variables on Overall Characteristics Expectations

A contingency variables research subquestion was: "How do contingency variables influence the overall personal characteristics expectations for superintendents?" This section presents the findings related to position occupied by respondents, size of school jurisdiction and type of school jurisdiction. Arrows on the graphs point to where the differences among subgroups are greater than twenty percent.

Profiles regarding position occupied by respondents are presented in Figure 27. There was a noticeable similarity among the profiles for the majority of characteristics. Intelligence, which was third in importance, was the only characteristic where there were differences of more than twenty percent. For this characteristic, Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Chairmen and Principals ascribed greater importance to intelligence than did the Superintendents

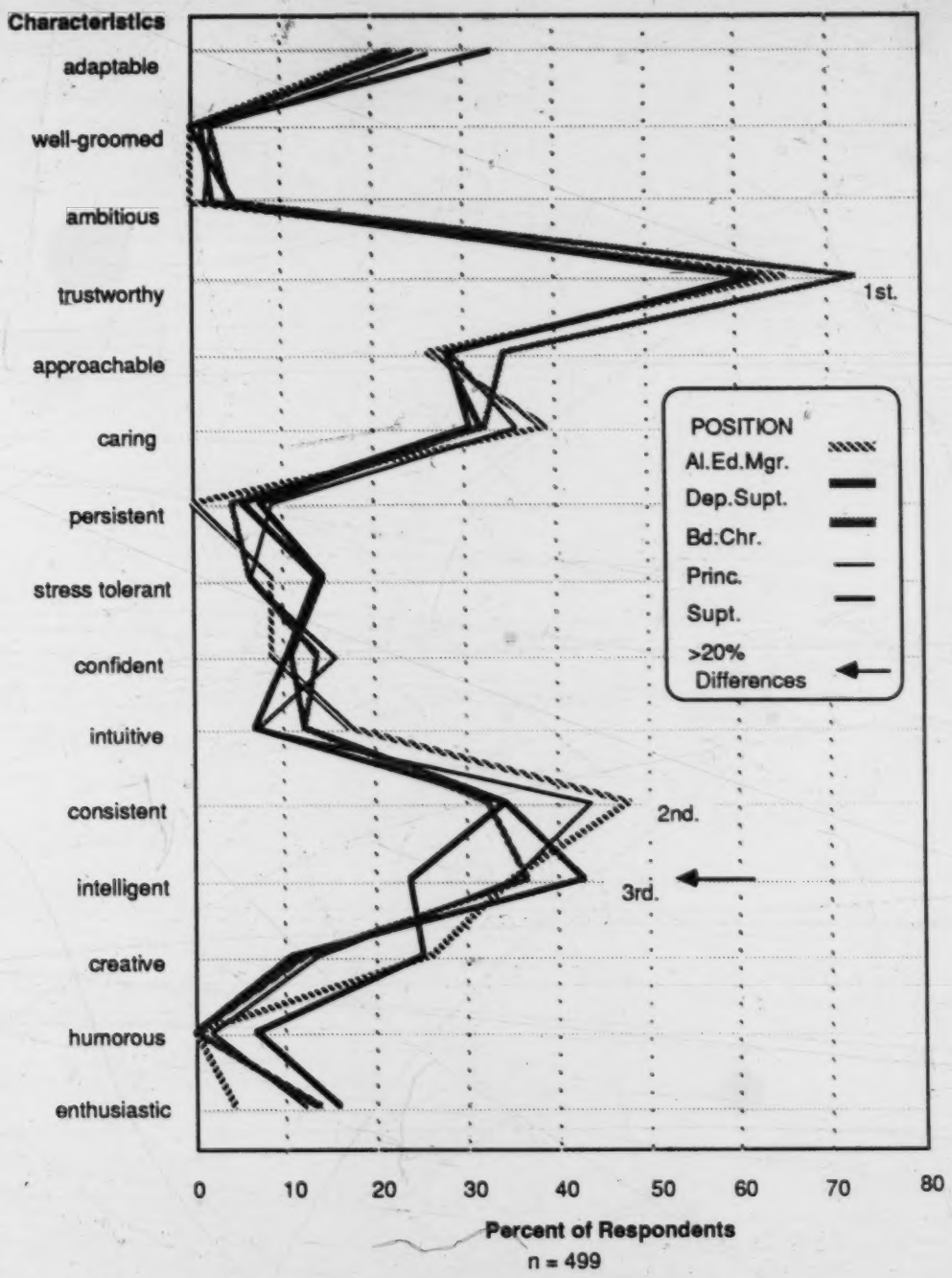

Figure 27
Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be
Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

subgroup.

A comparison by size of school jurisdiction is presented in Figure 28. Again intelligence was one of the two characteristics where there were greater than twenty percent differences among subgroups. The three smallest jurisdiction subgroups considered intelligence to be less important than did the two subgroups representing larger jurisdictions. Intelligence was considered to be most important in the largest jurisdictions.

Figure 29 presents characteristics profiles according to type of school jurisdiction. A comparison of the City, County, School Division, Several Districts, and Town profiles revealed no major differences in perceptions among the subgroups for the fifteen characteristics.

The above findings suggested that the variables of position occupied by respondents, size of school jurisdiction and type of school jurisdiction had limited influence on expectations for the importance of various characteristics in the overall work of superintendents.

Relationships of Characteristics and Task Areas

The next research question was: "What specific personal characteristics are perceived to be associated with the various task areas?" Task area profiles point out the levels of importance ascribed to the fifteen characteristics for each task area.

Characteristics for each task area were also considered in terms of a contingency variables research question: "How do contingency variables influence the expectations of personal characteristics for superintendents for different task areas?" The majority of differences

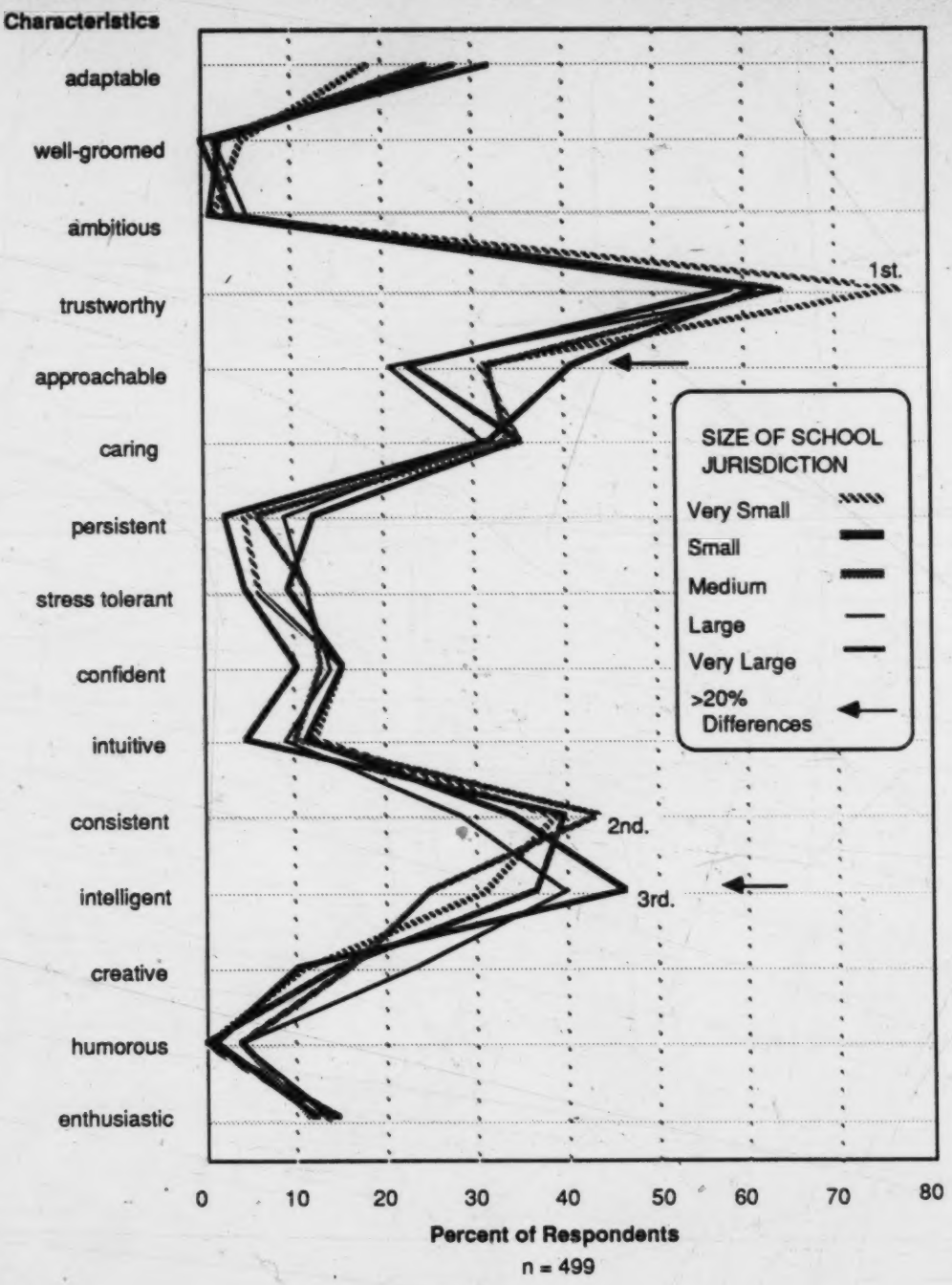

Figure 28

Size of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Characteristics
Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

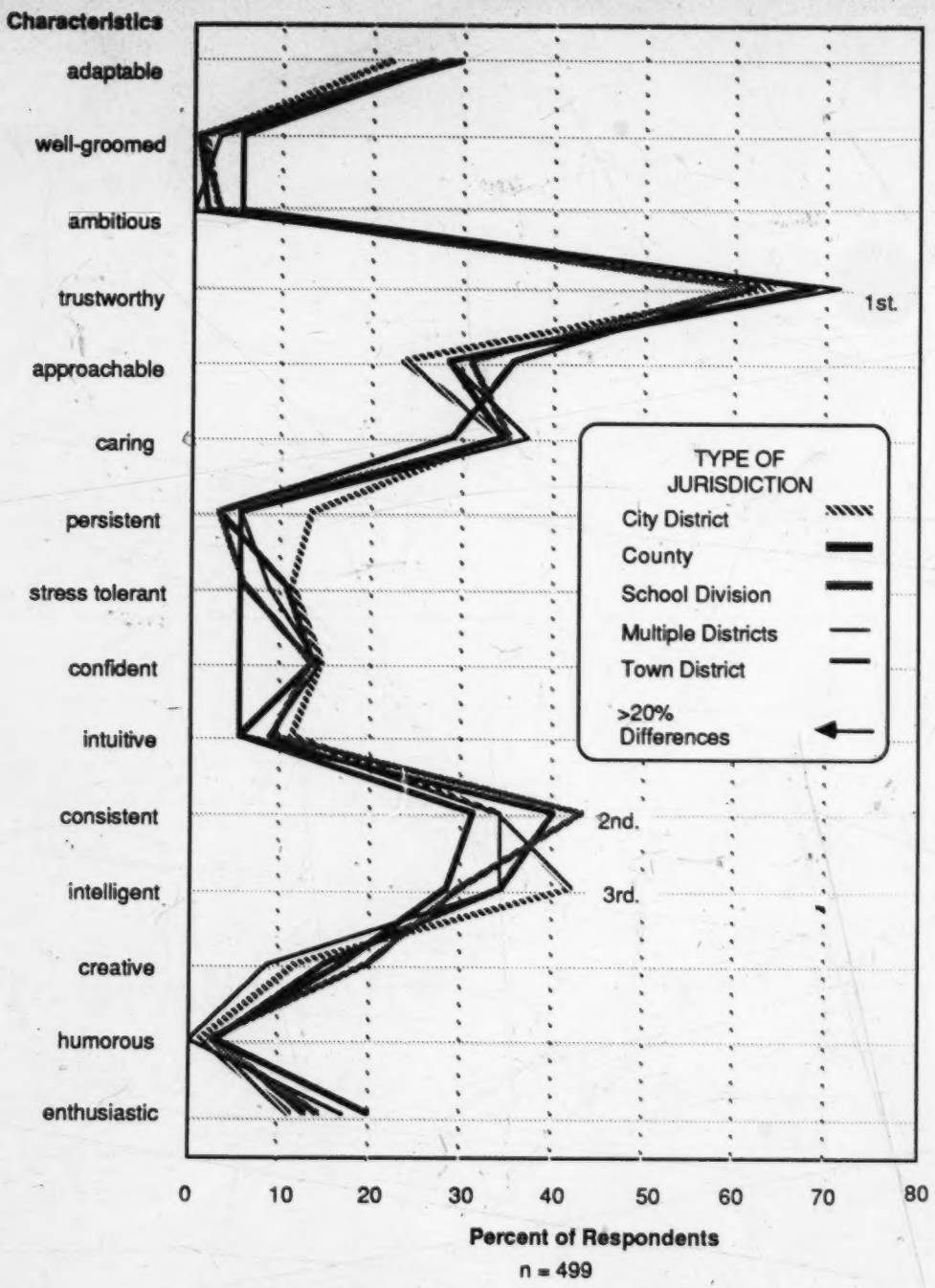

Figure 29

Type of School Jurisdiction Profiles of Characteristics
Deemed to be Most Important for the Overall Work of a School Superintendent

are found in the "position" variable.

Policy development. A total of 55.1% of respondents selected intelligence as a most important characteristic. Figure 30 shows that creativity and adaptability, with selection rates of 45.1% and 43.7%, ranked a close second and third.

The profiles in Figure 31 show that the position subgroups were in general agreement regarding the degrees of importance that should be ascribed to the top three characteristics. Greater than twenty percent differences among subgroups are indicated for a number of less important characteristics.

Evaluation. Figure 32 reveals that 73.8% of respondents selected consistency as a most important characteristic for the Evaluation task area. Figure 32 also shows that trustworthiness and caring were characteristics that placed a high second and third in importance, characteristics that were chosen by 57.4% and 44.8% of respondents.

The characteristics profiles in Figure 33 reveal that there was general agreement among position subgroups concerning what characteristics were important to a superintendent in the Evaluation task area. There was close agreement among the subgroups concerning a high degree of importance for consistency and trustworthiness. It was only for the third most important characteristic of caring that there was a considerable spread in degree of importance. Principals, Chairmen, Deputy Superintendents and Alberta Education Managers placed more importance on caring than did Superintendents.

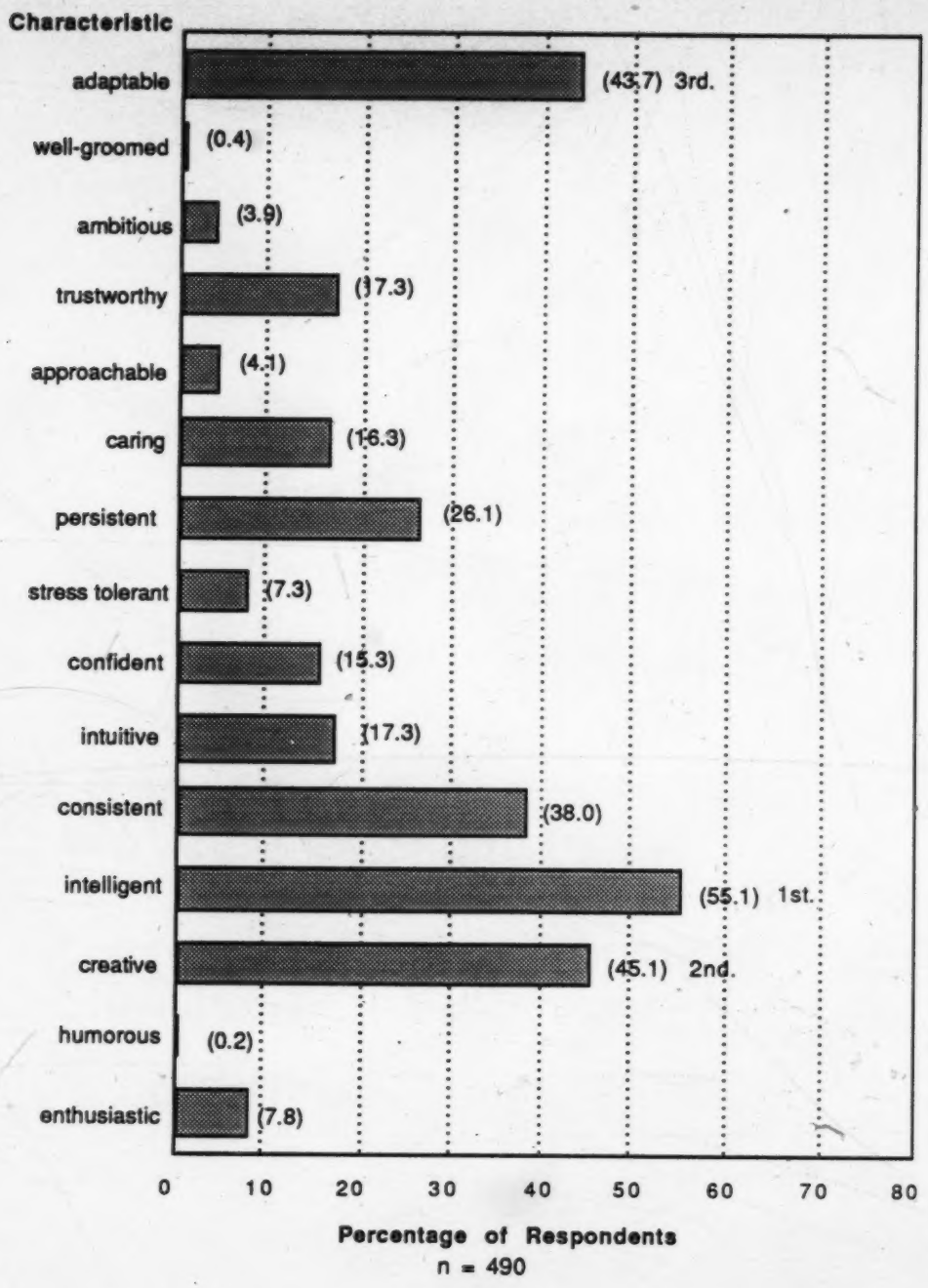

Figure 30

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policy

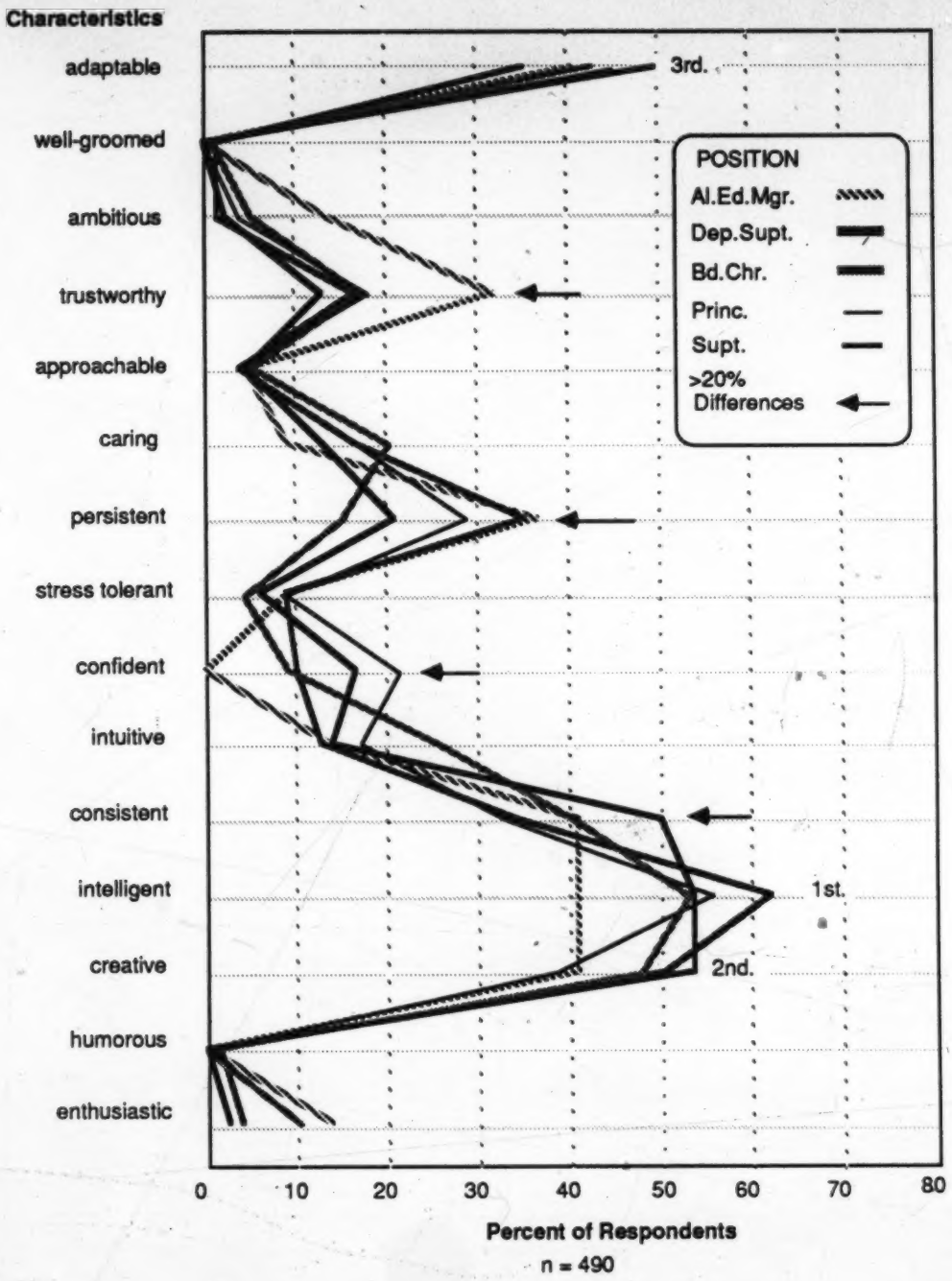

Figure 31

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing Policies

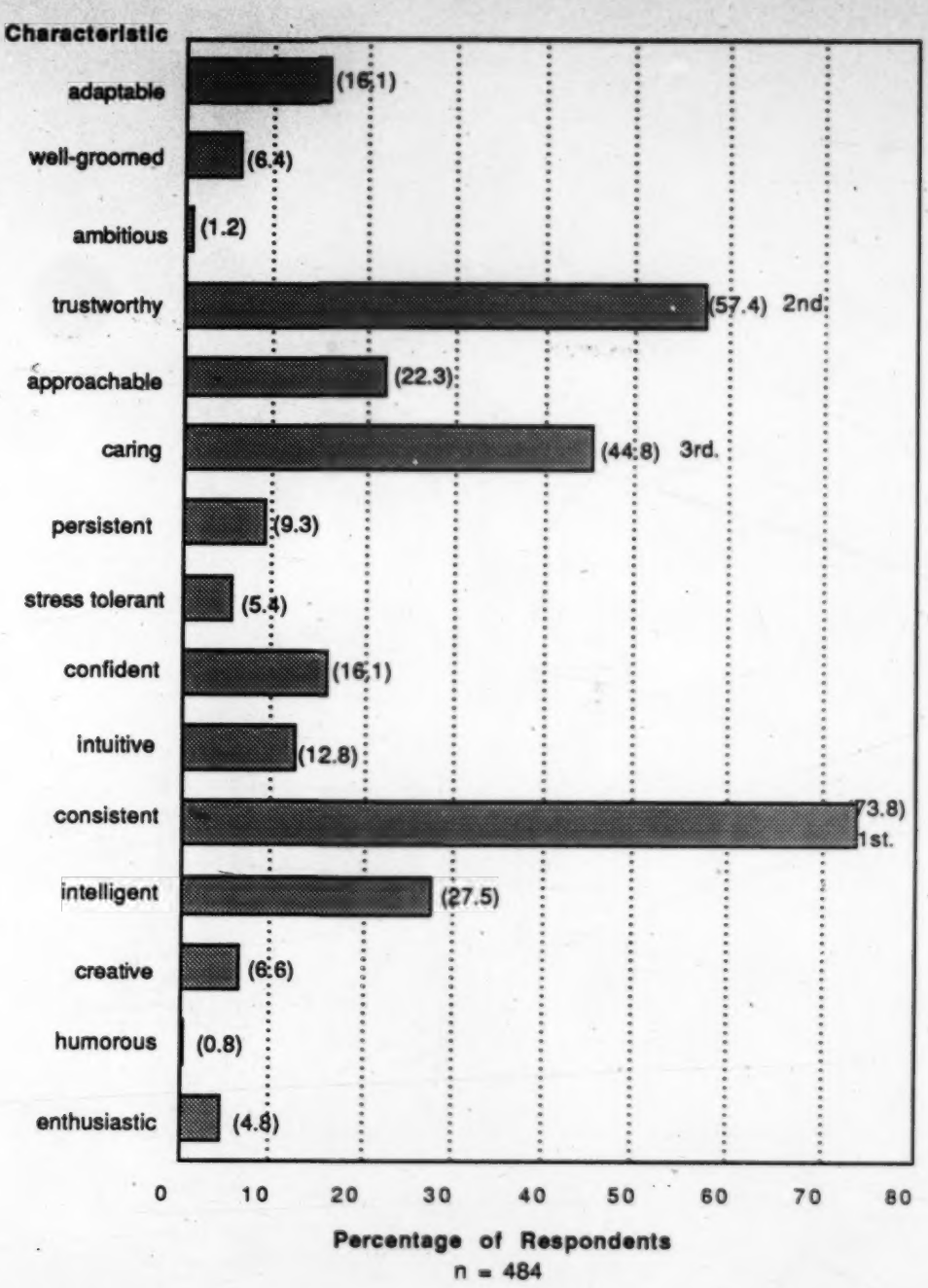

Figure 32

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities

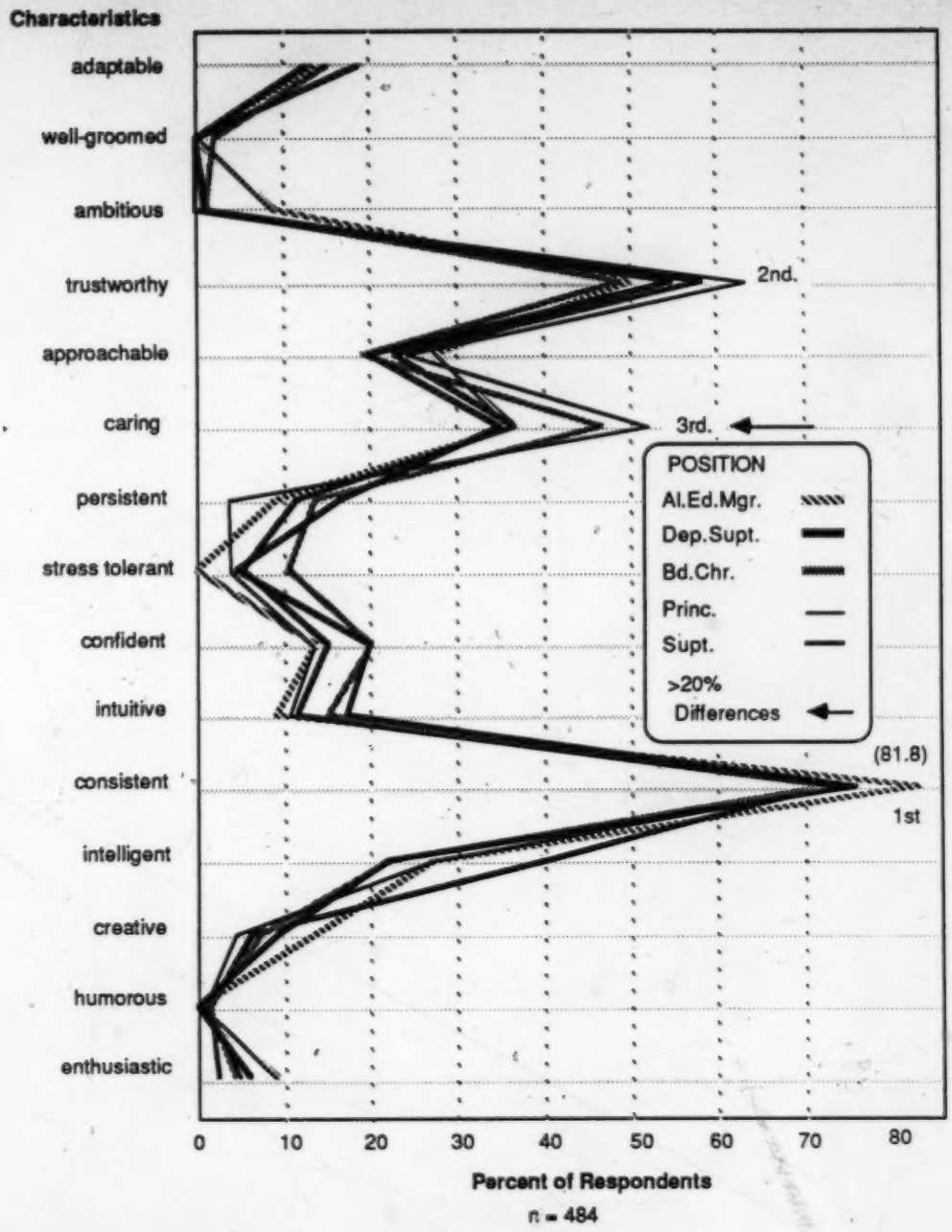

Figure 33

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Evaluation Activities

Working with trustees. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents selected trustworthiness as a most important characteristic for a superintendent when he is working with trustees. Figure 34 also shows that adaptability (39%) and confidence (31.9%) were characterstics rated as second and third in importance.

The subgroup profiles of Figure 35 reveal that there were perceptual differences regarding the degrees of importance of the various characteristics to the Working With Trustees task area. For the above mentioned characteristic of confidence, Deputy Superintendents, Principals and Alberta Education Managers considered confidence to be more important than did the Superintendents themselves. Chairmen were the only group that gave less importance to confidence than did Superintendents.

Public relations. Figure 36 shows that 60.3% of respondents chose approachability as the most important characteristic in the public relations activities of superintendents. Second and third in importance were enthusiasm (36%) and confidence (35.8%).

The profiles of Figure 37 provide information about the perceptions of the subgroups. There was close agreement among the subgroups concerning the levels of importance of the most important characteristics of approachability, enthusiasm and confidence. The larger differences in expectations occurred with the less important characteristics.

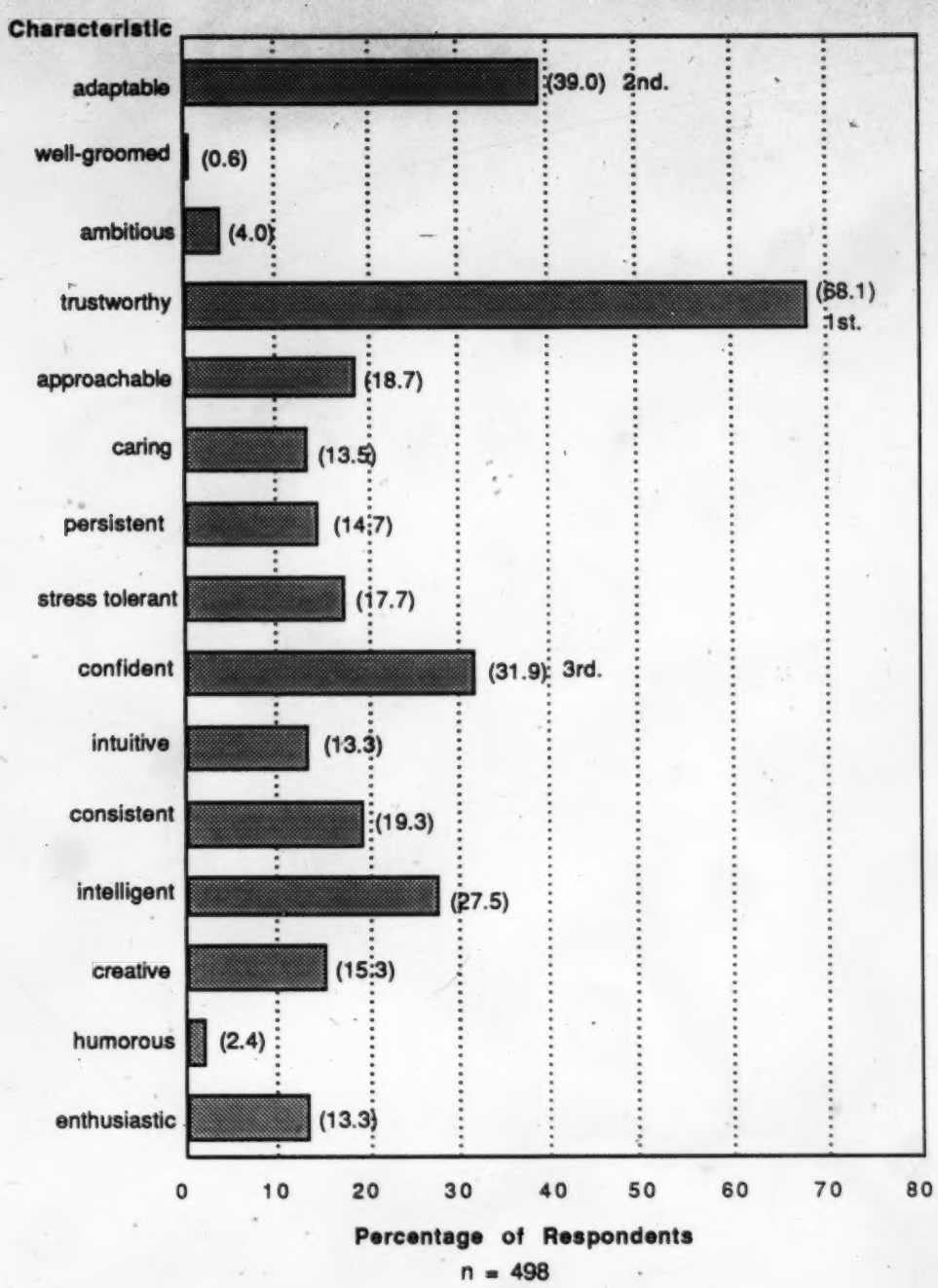

Figure 34

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees

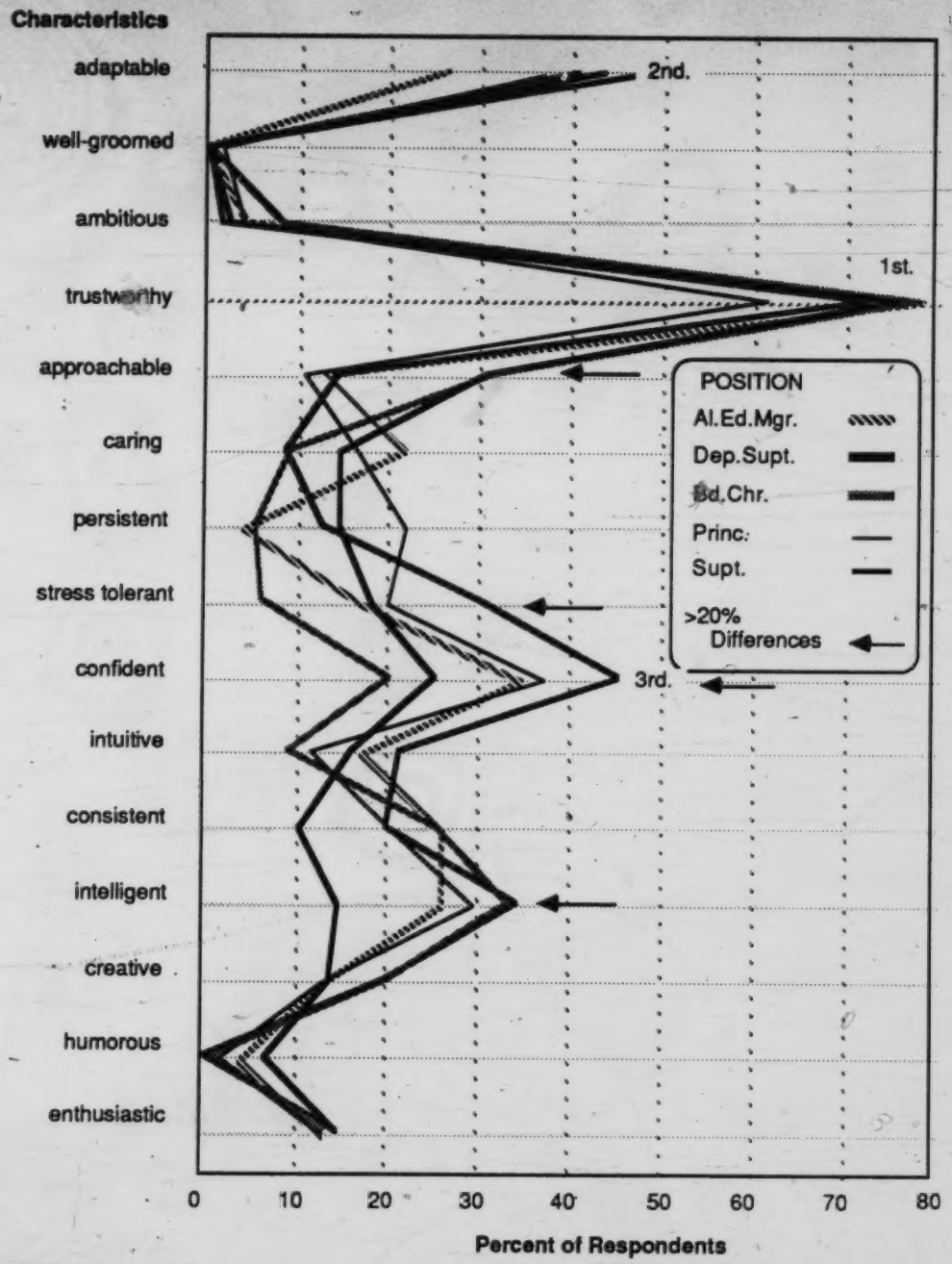

Figure 35

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Working With Trustees

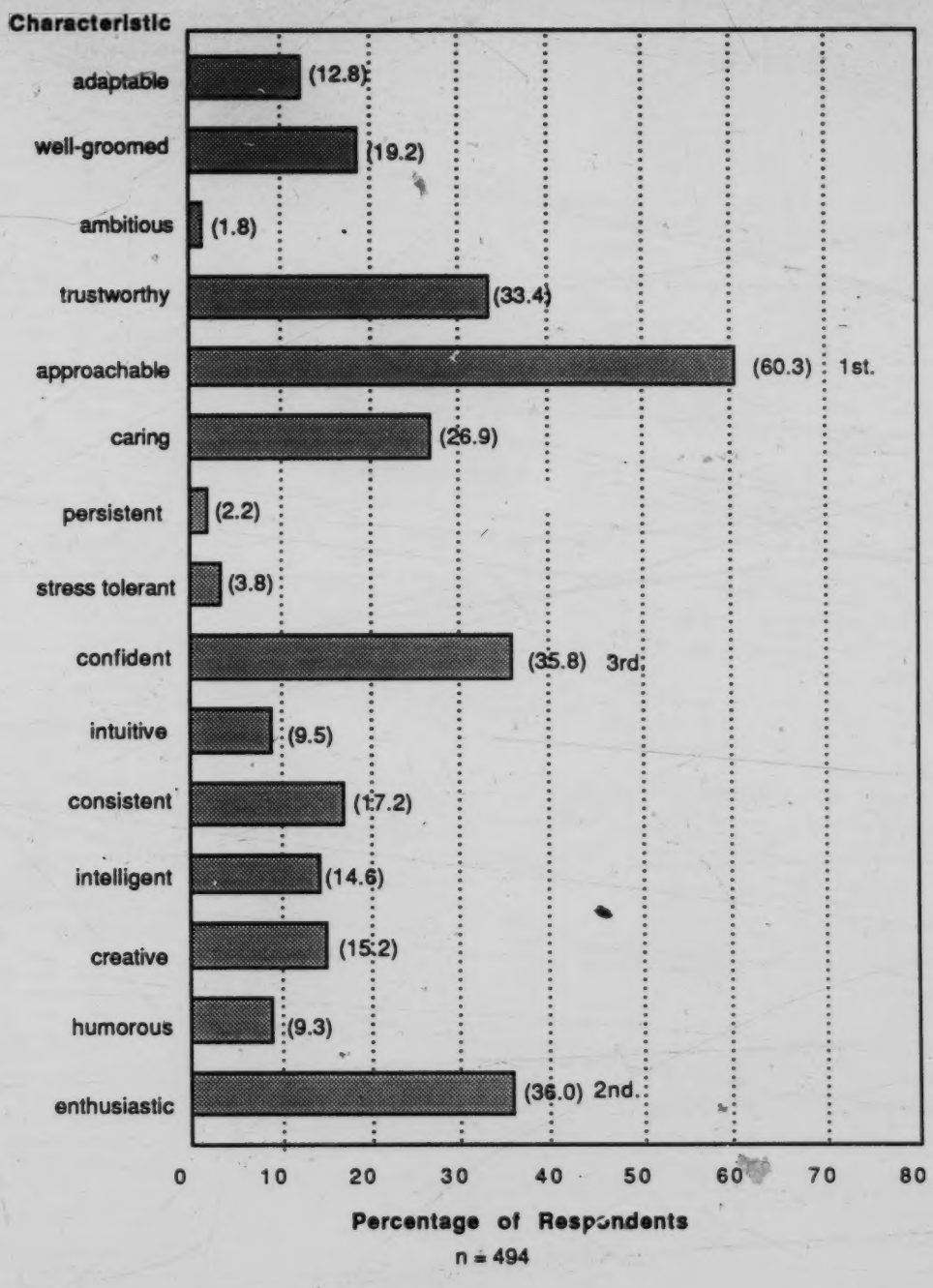

Figure 36

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important
When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities

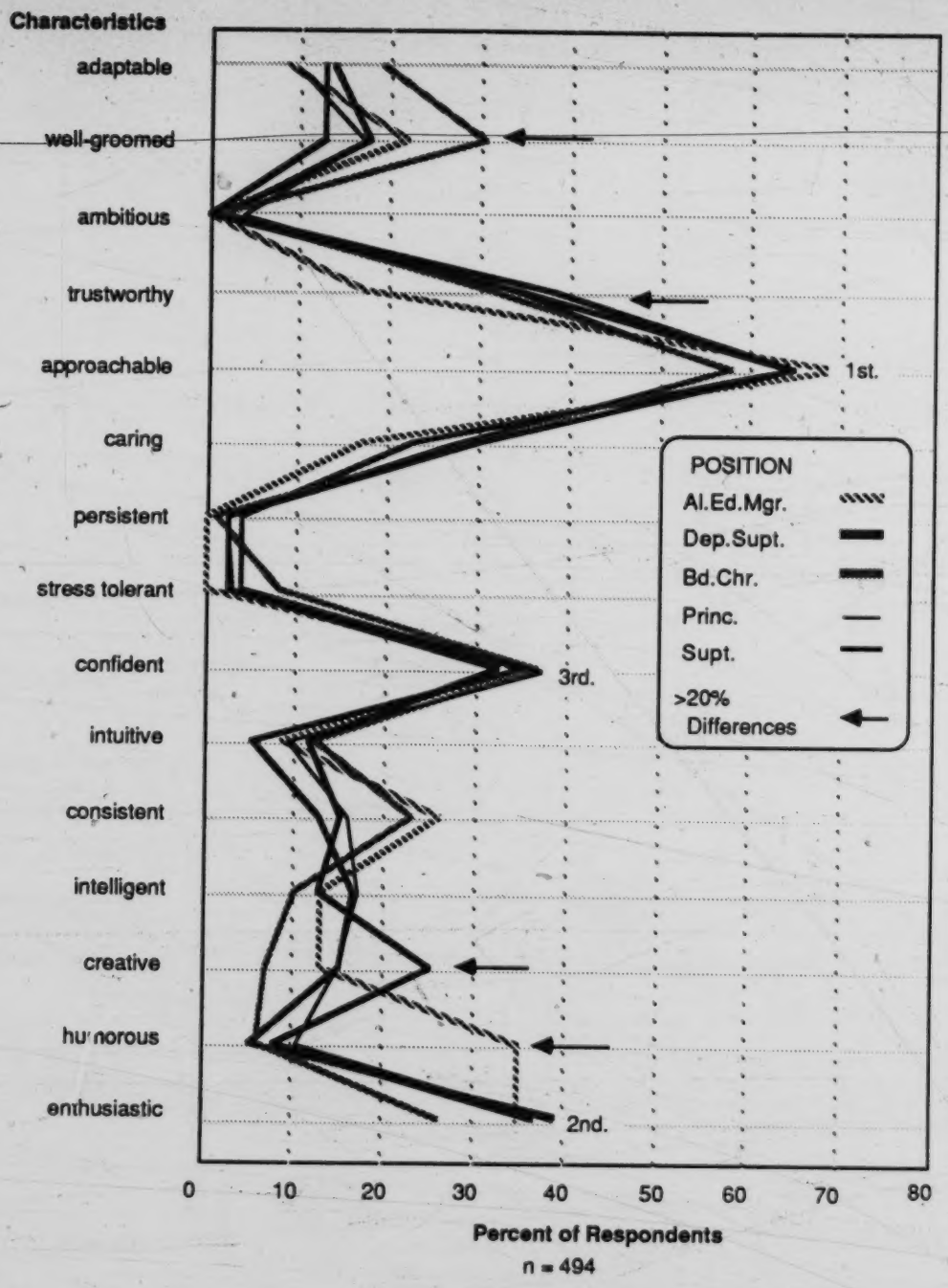

Figure 37

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Involved in Public Relations Activities

Managing staff. Figure 38 shows that consistency was first in importance according to 64.1% of respondents, approachability was second in importance according to 60.0% of respondents and caring was third in importance according to 57.2% of respondents.

Although the five subgroups agreed that the above characteristics were most important when a superintendent was Managing Staff, there were differences among the subgroups concerning the degree of importance of each of the characteristics. These differences are contained in Figure 39. For the characteristic of consistency, Alberta Education Managers showed the highest level of importance, Superintendents, Principals and Chairmen agreed to a middle level of importance, and Deputy Superintendents showed a lower level of importance than did the other respondent groups. Approachability was assigned the highest level of importance by Superintendents, while other subgroups thought that approachability was less important. For the characteristic of caring, Superintendents showed a middle level of importance in comparison to higher levels of importance being shown by Principals and Deputy Superintendents, and lower levels of importance being shown by Chairmen and Alberta Education Managers.

Business management. Figure 40 shows the importance of the characteristics to a superintendent coordinating business management activities, and 43.2% of respondents indicated that intelligence was most important. A close second characteristic requirement was trustworthiness (42.1%). Third in importance was consistency (35.5%).

The profiles of Figure 41 provide information regarding subgroup

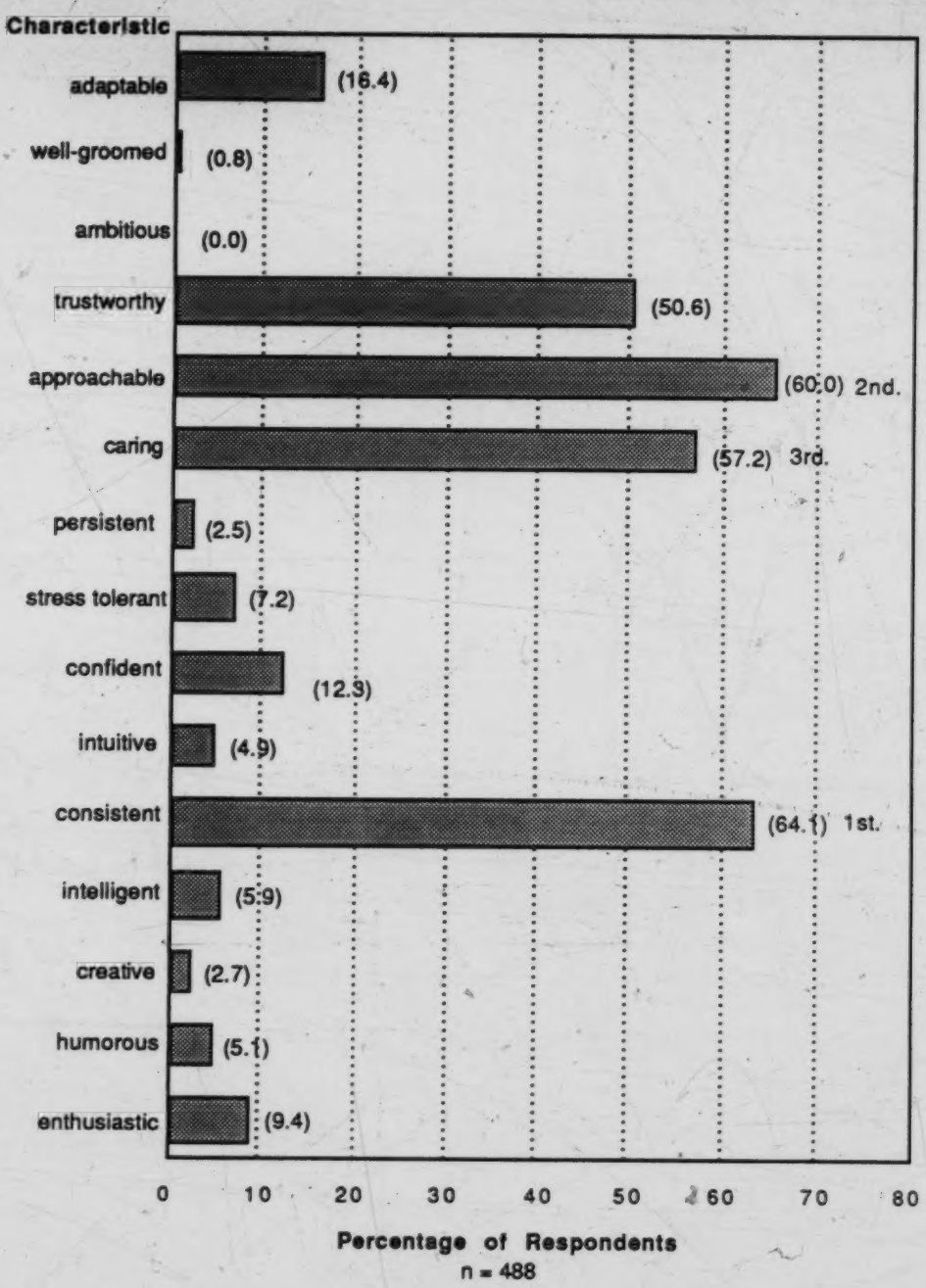

Figure 38

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff

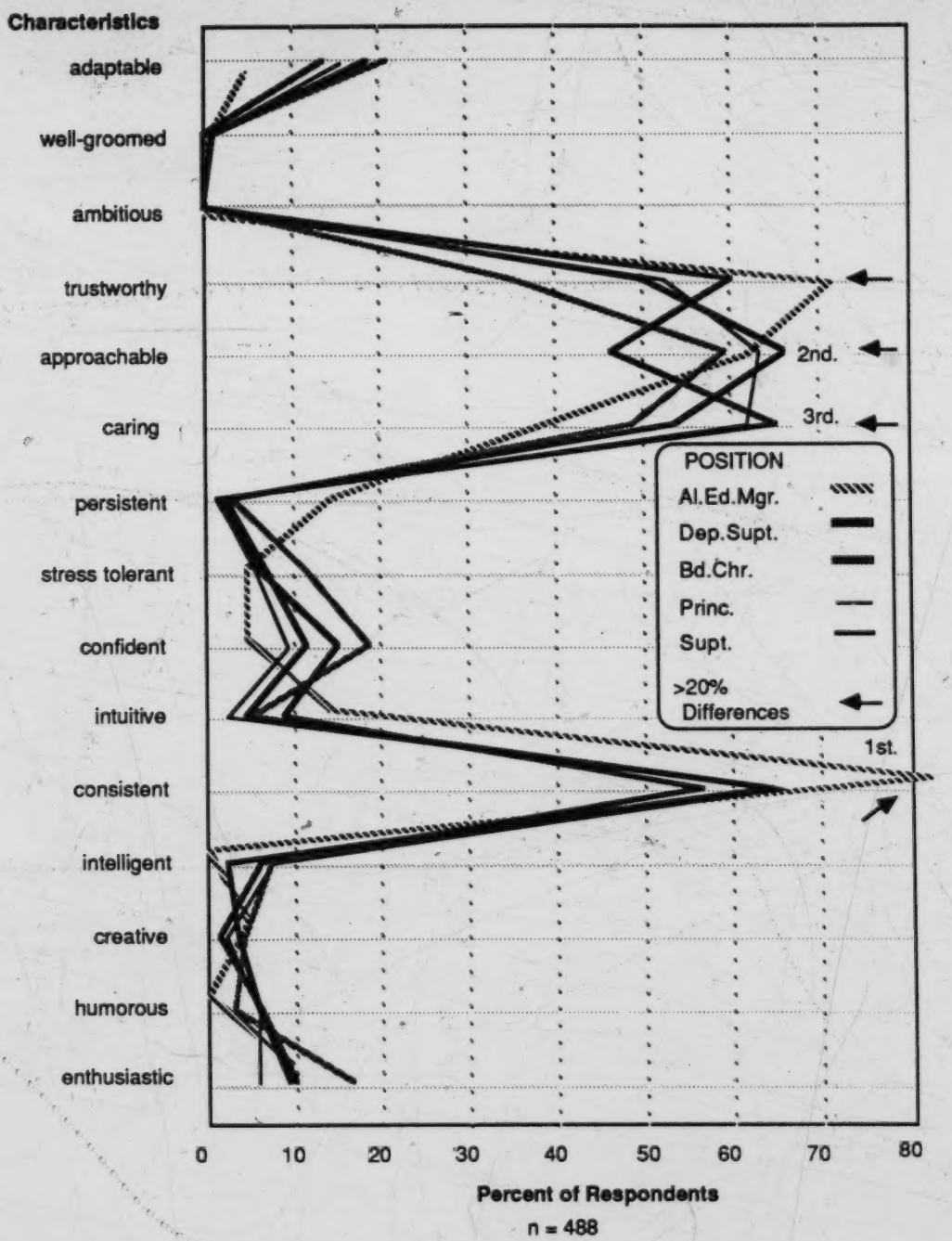

Figure 39

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Staff

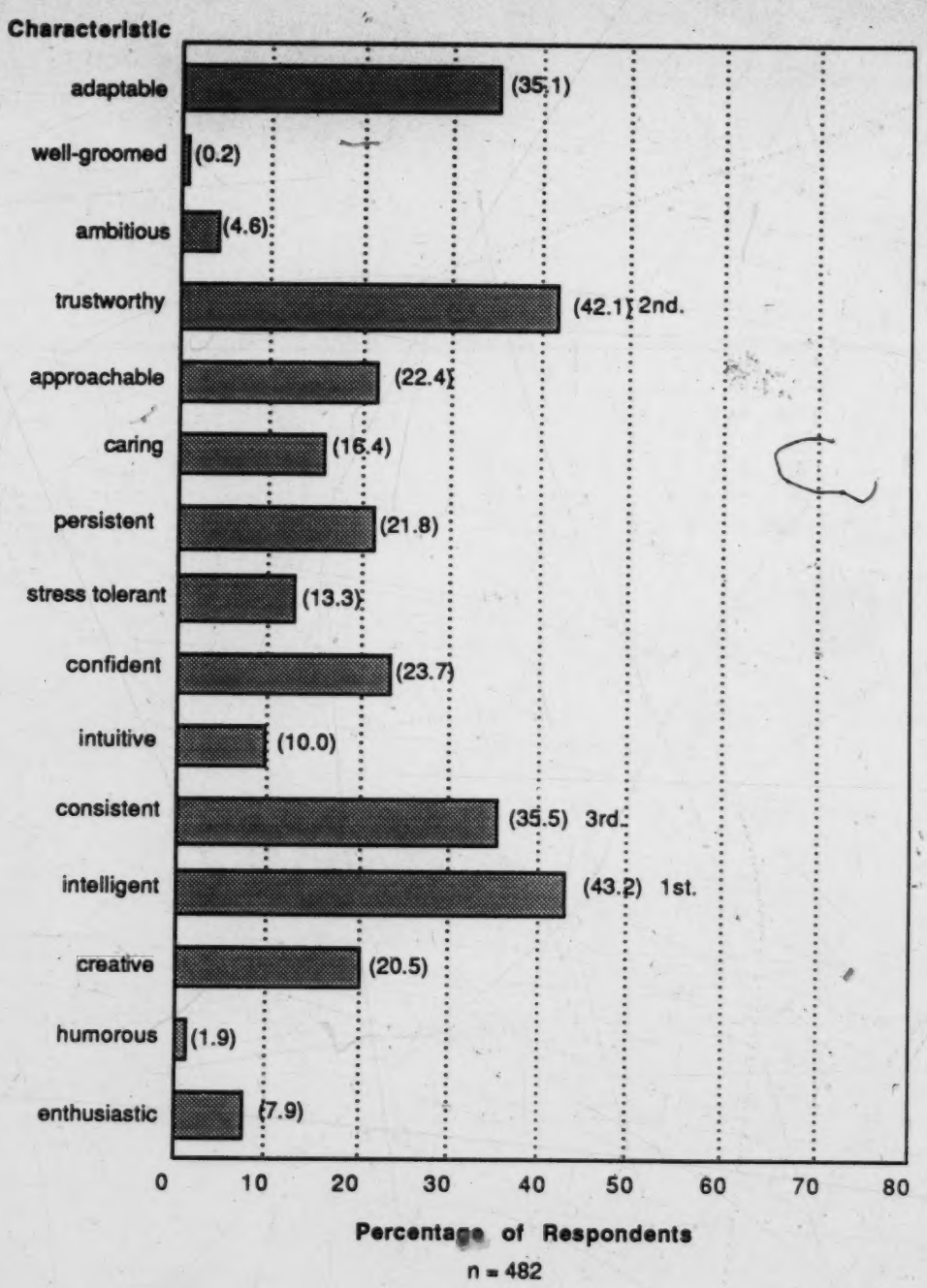

Figure 40

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities

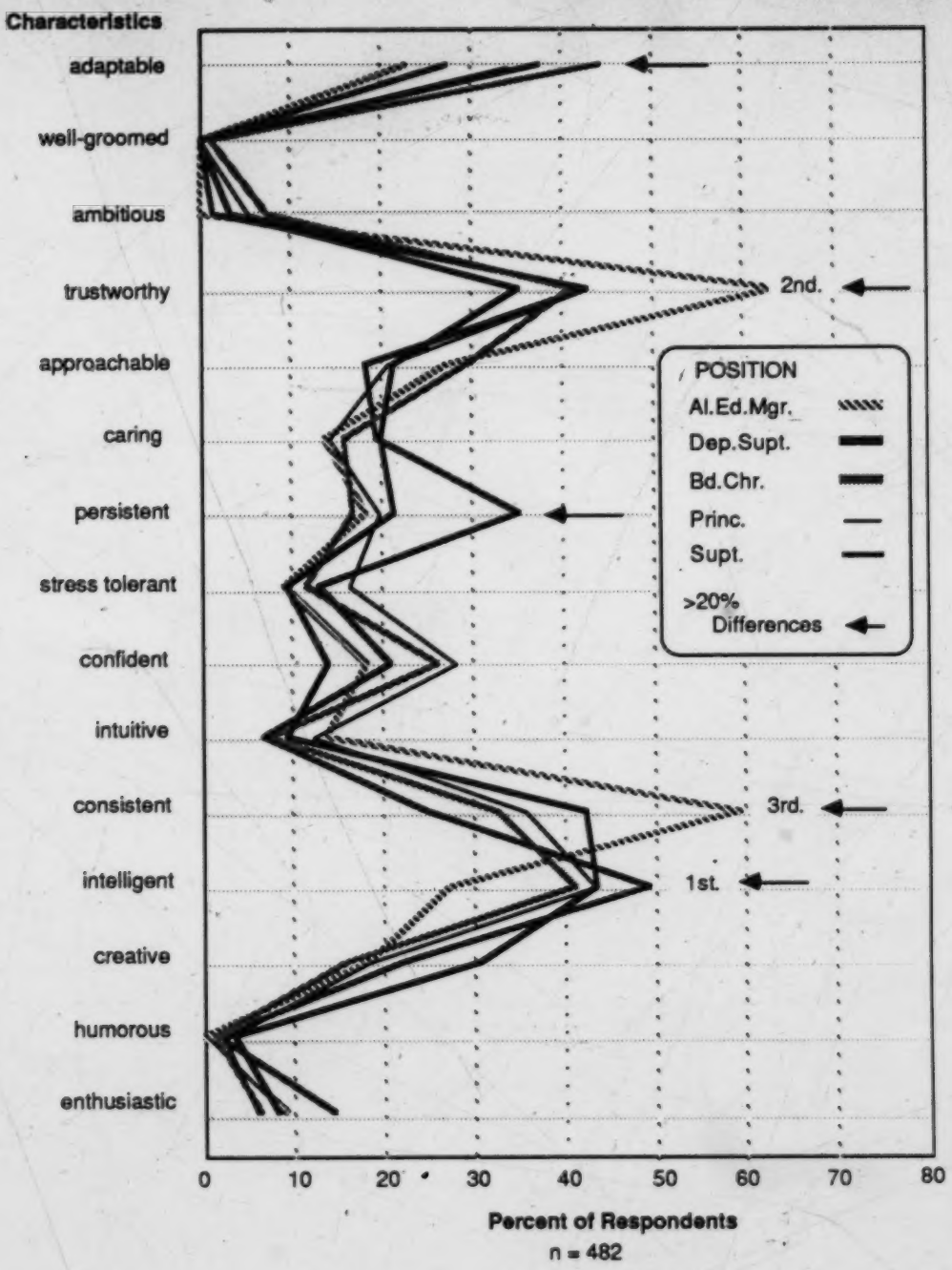

Figure 41

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating Business Management Activities

differences in expectations for the above characteristics. The degrees of importance for intelligence was highest with the Deputy Superintendent subgroup, second for the Superintendent subgroup, third for Principals, fourth for Chairmen and fifth for Alberta Education Managers. The degrees of importance of trustworthiness was much higher for Alberta Education Managers than for other respondent groups. In contrast, the degree of importance for trustworthiness was lowest for the Superintendent subgroup. For the characteristic of consistency, the Alberta Education Manager ratings were much higher than the other subgroups.

School programs. Figure 42 illustrates that three personal characteristics were most important when a superintendent was developing school programs: 53.7% emphasized creativity, 48.1% emphasized adaptability, and 39.9% emphasized intelligence.

Figure 43 shows the variability of importance among the subgroups for these characteristics. Ratings for creativity were highest for Superintendents and lowest for Principals. Adaptability was rated most important by Alberta Education Managers, and in decreasing order of importance by Principals, Superintendents, Chairmen and Deputy Superintendents.

School facilities. The Figure 44 profile illustrates the importance of being adaptable, consistent and intelligent when a superintendent was working in the School Facilities task area. Adaptability was selected by 46.3% of respondents, consistency by 36.7%

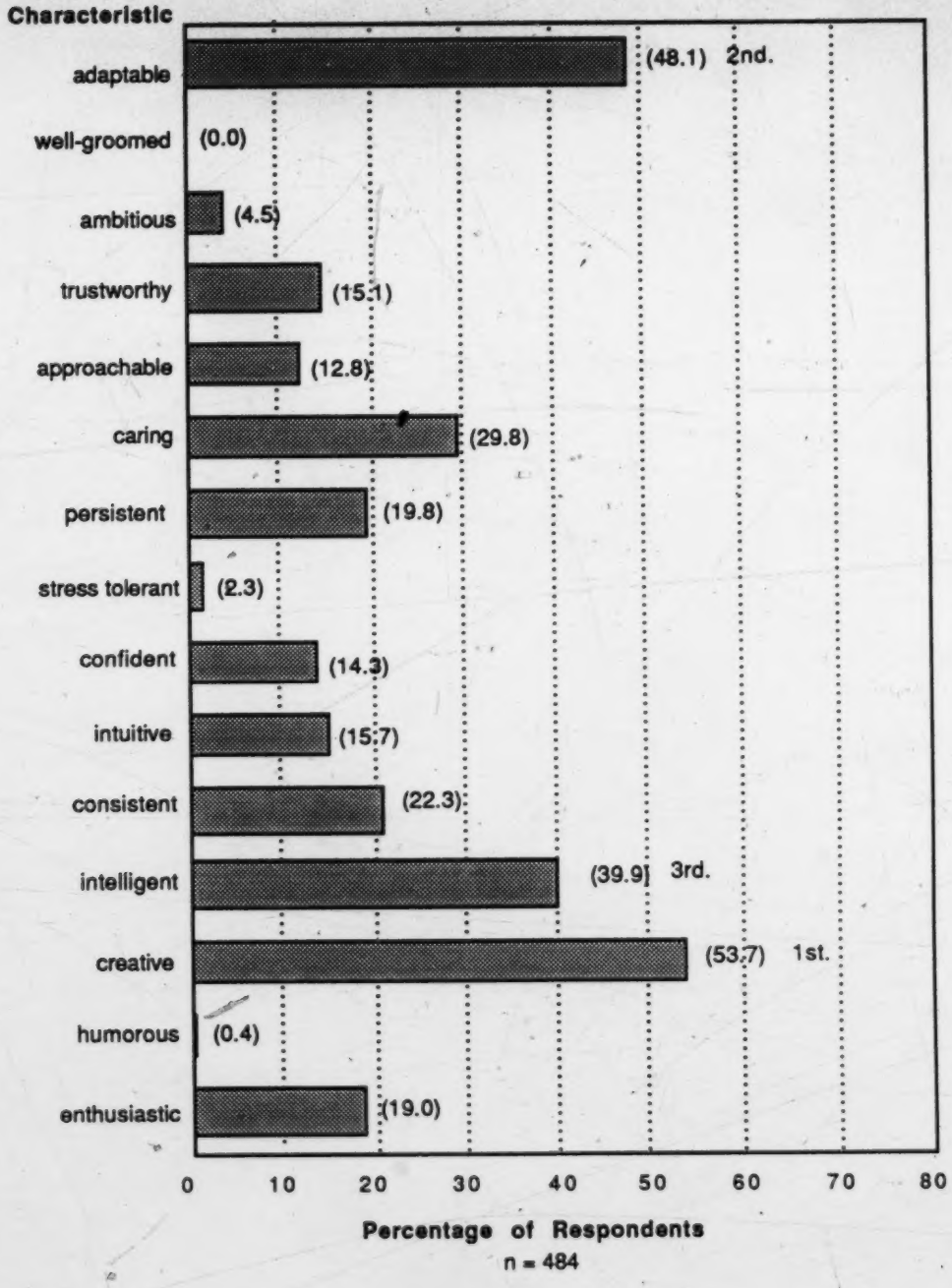

Figure 42

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs

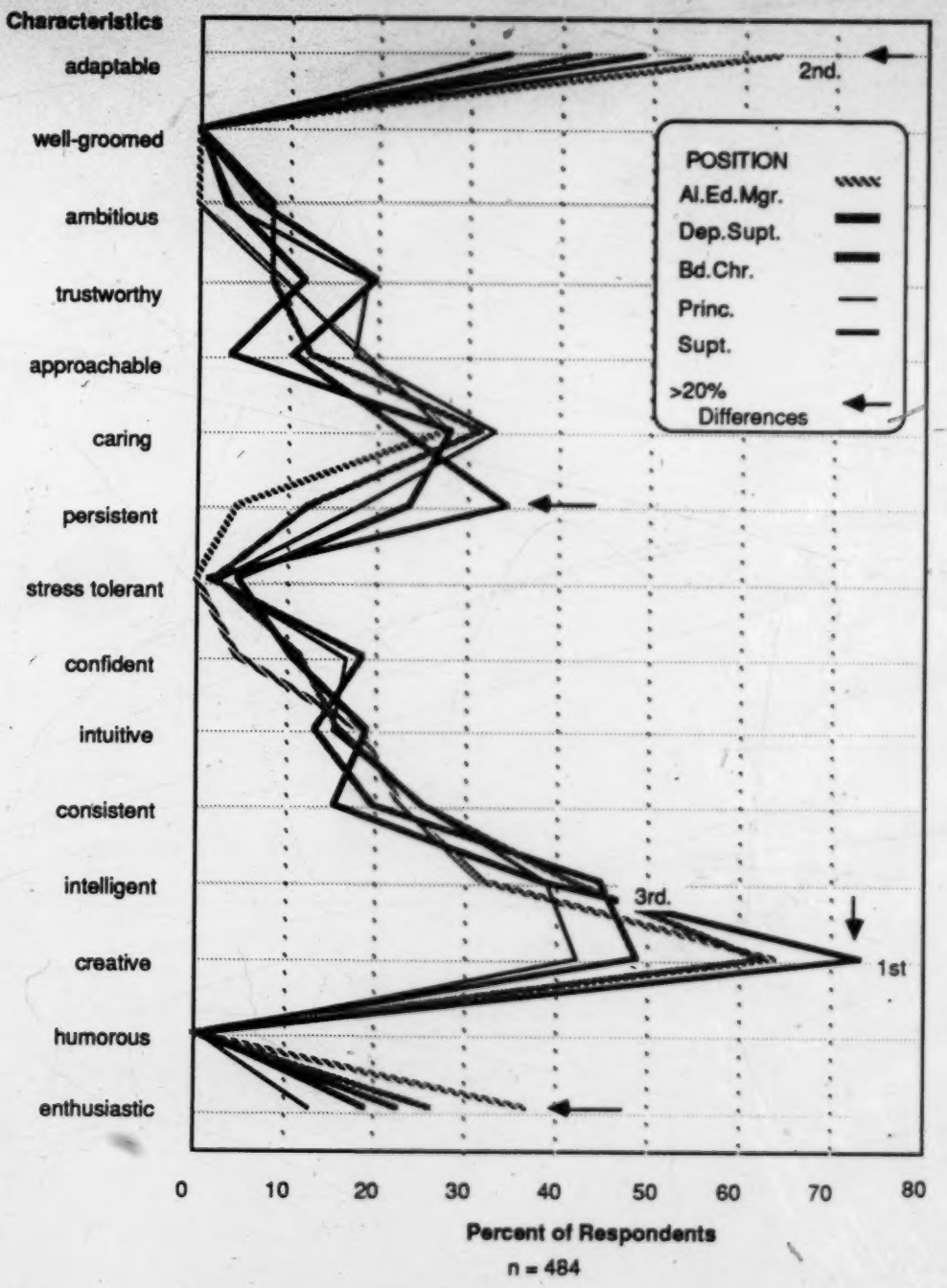

Figure 43

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Developing School Programs

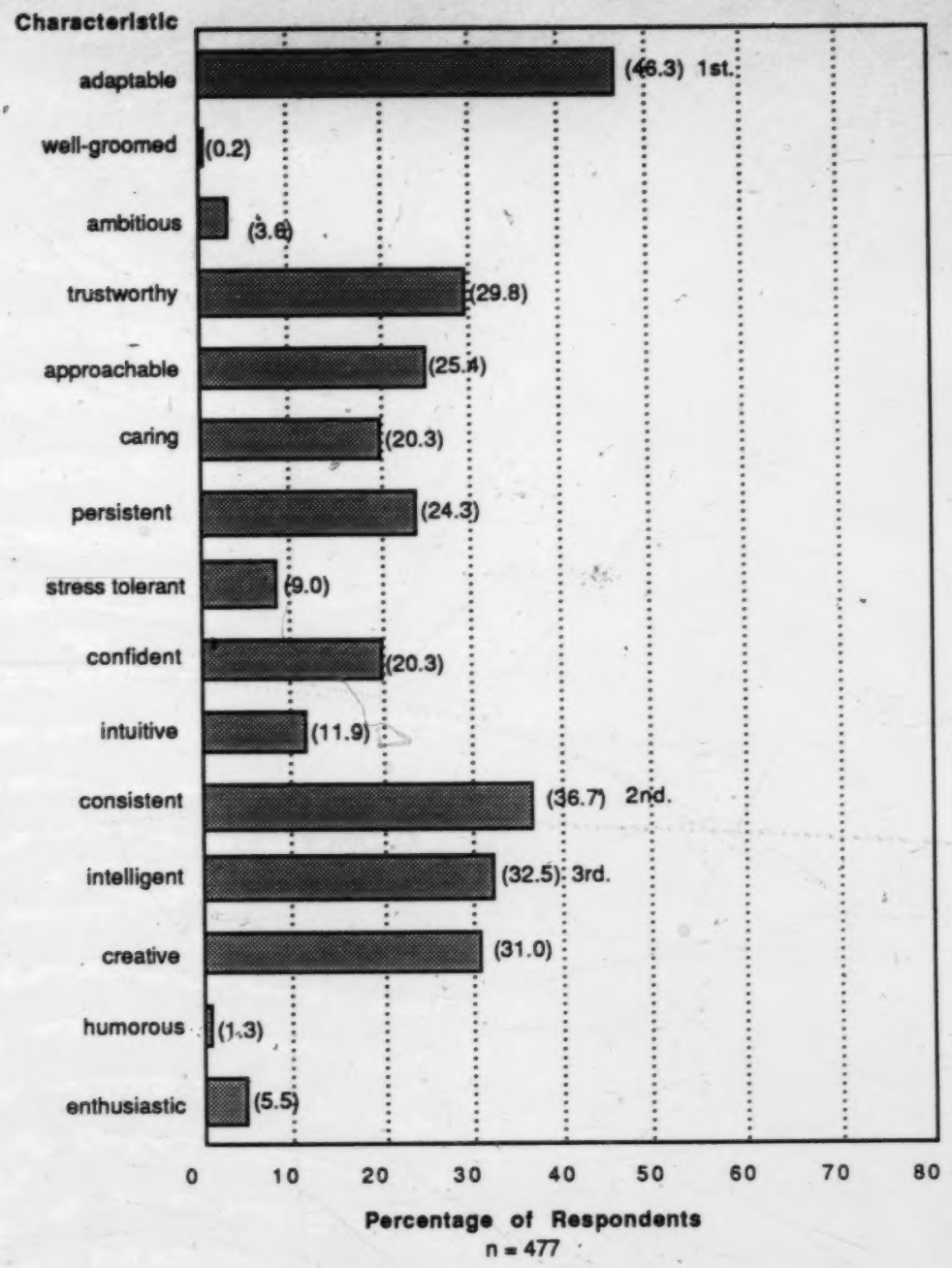

Figure 44

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities

of respondents and intelligence by 32.5% of respondents.

As far as the above three most important characteristics are concerned, it is only with consistency that noteable differences were recorded among position subgroups. Figure 45 reveals that Alberta Education Managers and Superintendents thought consistency was more important than did Principals, Chairmen and Deputy Superintendents.

Student services. Caring was considered to be most important in managing student services. Figure 46 shows that this characteristic was selected by 62.8% of respondents. Consistency (53.3%) was considered to be the second most important characteristic and approachability (32.8%) the third most important characteristic.

Figure 47 reveals that there was general agreement among the subgroups concerning the degrees of importance that should be attributed to the above characteristics.

Transportation. Consistency, adaptability and approachability were perceived to be the most important characteristics for a superintendent coordinating the management of transportation programs. Figure 48 shows that 46.1% or respondents selected consistency, 44.4% of respondents selected adaptability and 32.3% of respondents selected approachability.

The characteristics profiles of Figure 49 point to uniformity among the position subgroups regarding the above three most important characteristics.

Summary. An examination of the top three characteristics for each

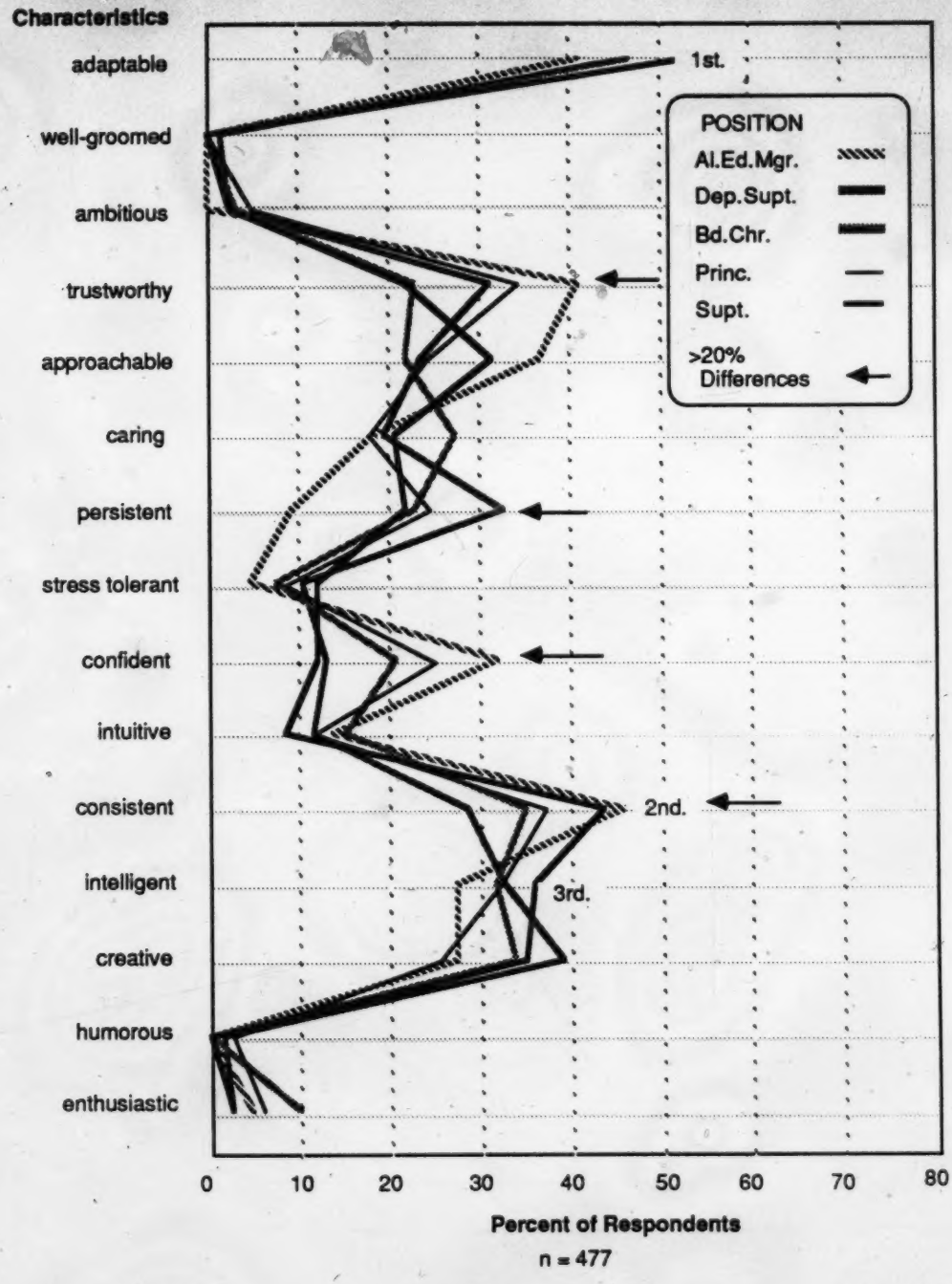

Figure 45

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of School Facilities

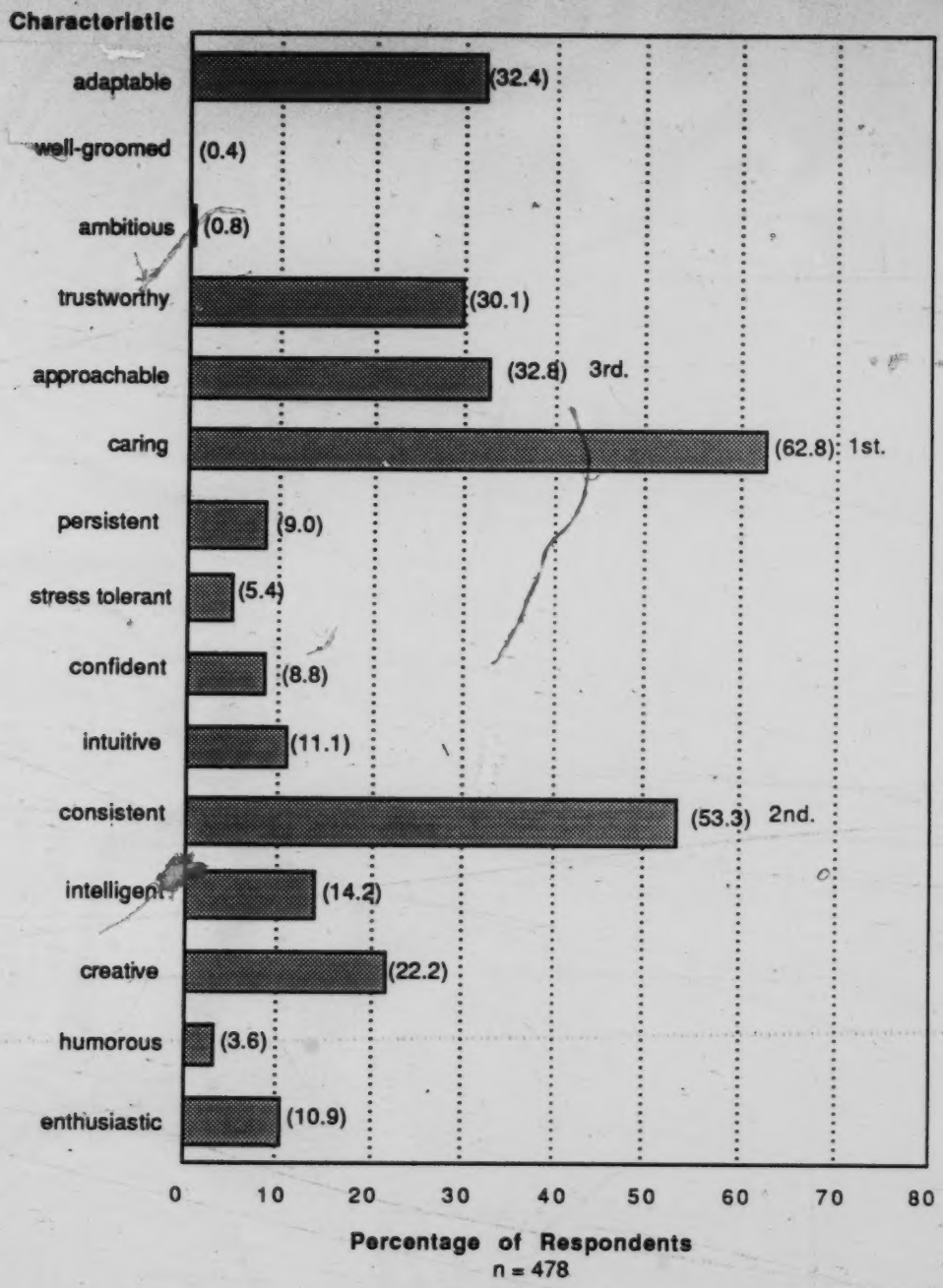

Figure 46

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services

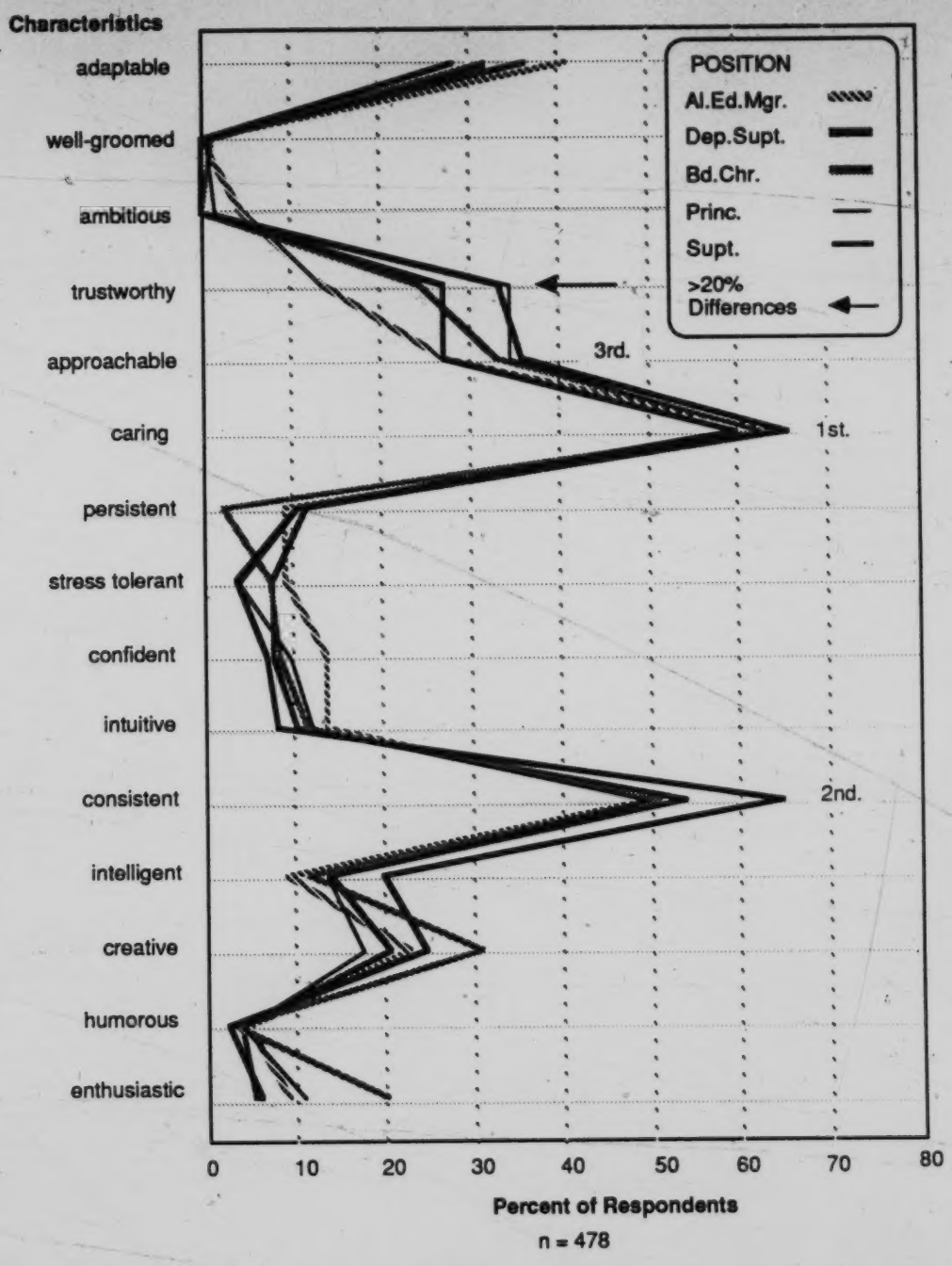

Figure 47

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Managing Student Services

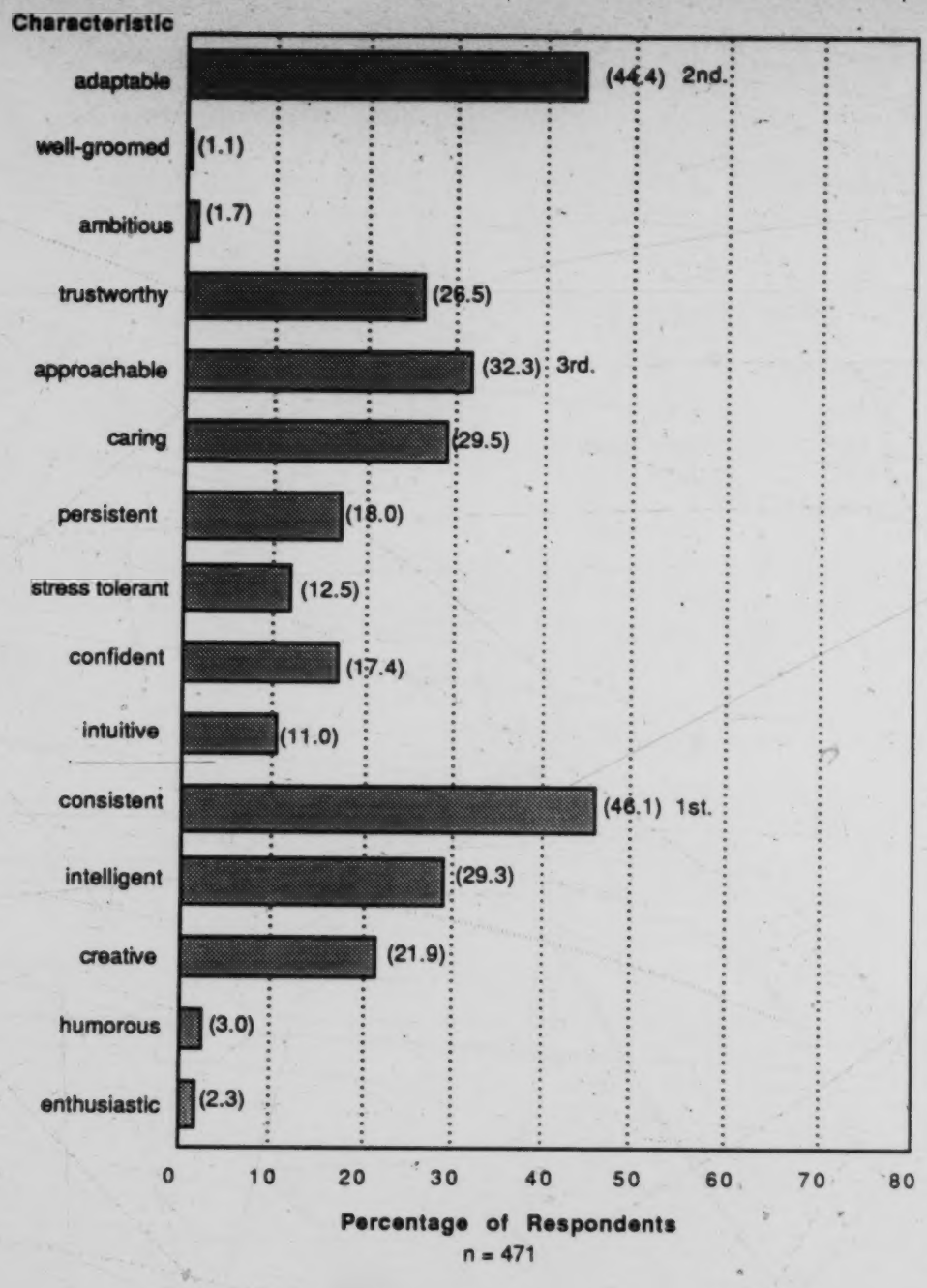

Figure 48

Total Sample Profile of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities

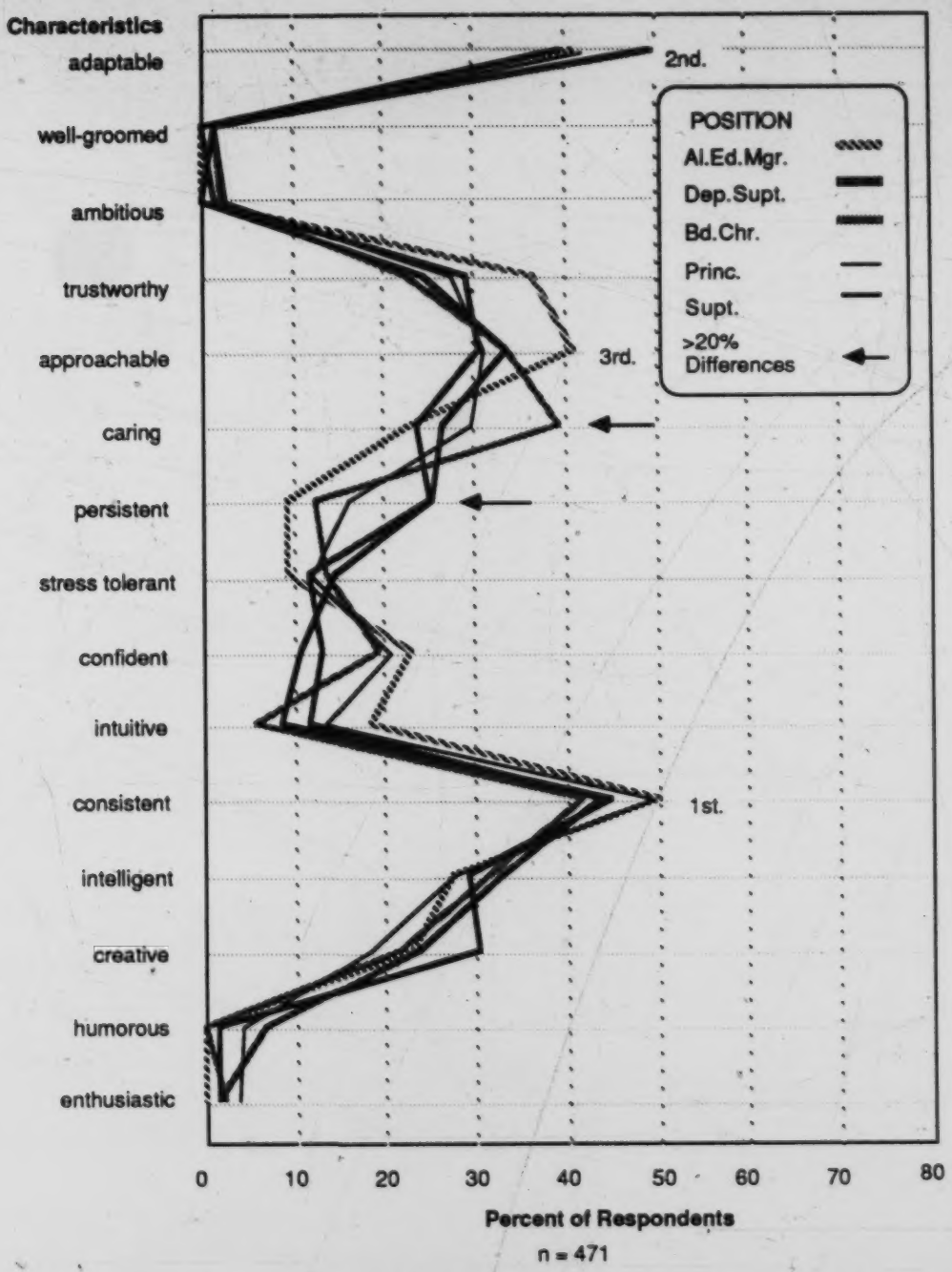

Figure 49

Position Profiles of Characteristics Deemed to be Most Important When a Superintendent is Coordinating the Management of Bus Transportation Activities

task area revealed that the same characteristics were considered important for a number of task areas. Consistency was selected for the following six task areas: Evaluation, Managing Staff, Business Management, School Facilities, Student Services and Transportation. Adaptability was considered to be important for five task areas, namely, Developing Policies, Working With Trustees, School Programs, School Facilities and Transportation. Two characteristics were each selected for four task areas. Intelligence was important for Developing Policies, Business Management, School Programs and School Facilities. Approachability was important in Public Relations, Managing Staff, Student Services, and Transportation. Two characteristics were each selected for three task areas; trustworthiness was important for Evaluation, Working With Trustees and Business Management; caring was selected for Evaluation, Managing Staff and Student Services. Another two characteristics were selected for two task areas: creativity selected for Developing Policies and School Programs; and confidence for Working With Trustees and Public Relations. Enthusiasm was selected once for the Public Relations task area.

A further examination of the findings revealed that for eight of ten task areas the three most important characteristic requirements were unique to each task area. There were only two task areas where the same three characteristics were emphasized. In the Developing Policies and School Programs task areas, intelligence, creativity and adaptability were selected as the top three characteristics.

General Importance of Skills, Characteristics and Tasks

Another research question was, "What is the relative importance of tasks, characteristics and skills variables?" Respondents were asked to rate the degree of importance of tasks, skills and characteristics on a five point scale. The means of all respondents were: Skills 4.60, Characteristics 4.52 and Tasks 3.97. Skills of a superintendent were perceived to be most important, closely followed by characteristics. Tasks had a considerably lower mean and were considered to be third in importance. These differences in means were not statistically significant.

This order of importance of skills, characteristics and tasks was further supported by written comments of respondents. An Alberta Education Manager made the following statement about the importance of skills and personal characteristics:

> The role of superintendent requires adaptability, political astuteness, fairness, vision and the ability to make decisions. Its breadth of responsibility varies with the philosophy of the system, its goals, its organization, its issues and management of the relationship established between board and superintendent.

Likewise, a Board Chairman highlighted the personality requirements of a superintendent when he said,

> School superintendents must have vision, must be leaders, must avoid administrative screw-ups, must be very intelligent, totally honest and capable of self-honesty.

A Deputy Superintendent indicated that a superintendent needs to be honest and have the ability to listen to others. He stated,

> I believe that honesty in dealing with fellow workers is a key

> element in the making of a good superintendent. As well, the effective superintendent must make others in the system feel that their concerns are most important to him/her, that is, make it appear that he has time to listen.

Two principals expressed similar views that skills and characteristics are most important.

> I wish they were all like ours! He is enthusiastic, down-to-earth, approachable and a real people person. He isn't perfect, but I'm confident that he always tries his best!
>
> _____ is truly my ideal! Knowledgeable, caring, able to delegate responsibility, confident defining of tasks, involvement at all levels in decision-making. He's great!

The above statements seemed to capture the views of most respondents regarding the primary importance of skills and personal characteristics in the role of a superintendent.

Summary

The first section of this chapter presented findings related to tasks of superintendents. The rank ordering of task areas from most important to least important was as follows: Policy Development, Evaluation, Working With Trustees, Public Relations, Managing Staff, Business Management, Developing School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Transportation.

When task data were grouped according to contingencies, a number of other findings emerged. A comparison according to position occupied by respondents revealed that task expectations of Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents and Alberta Education Managers subgroups were

similar, whereas expectations of Chairmen and Principals subgroups were different to each other and from the aforementioned groups. Most of the significant differences were noted in Policy Development, Evaluation, Working With Trustees and Public Relations task areas. In a size of jurisdiction variables comparison, most of the significant differences in task expectations were noted between Very Large jurisdictions of over 500 teachers and Very Small jurisdictions of less than fifty teachers. Type of school jurisdiction findings were similar to the size variables comparison. Task expectations of the City subgroup was significantly lower for a number of tasks than the expectations of County, Division, Town and Several Districts subgroups.

A second major section of the chapter was devoted to a discussion of important skills. The three most important skills relating to the overall work of a superintendent were making decisions, delegating responsibilities and being sensitive. For the ten task areas, delegating responsibilities and making decisions were selected more frequently than other skills.

A position occupied by respondents comparison revealed that expectations for the five subgroups of Alberta Education Managers, Chairmen, Deputy Superintendents, Principals and Superintendents were similar regarding which skills were important (1) to the overall work of a superintendent and (2) to work in each task area. Expectations were different regarding the degree of importance of the identified skills.

One major difference was noted in a size of jurisdiction comparison. Delegating responsibilities was considered to be a more

important general skill in larger school jurisdictions than in smaller jurisdictions.

In comparisons across types of jurisdictions, the skill of decision-making in the overall work of a superintendent was recognized to be more important in City, County and School Division subgroups, and less important in Several Districts and Town subgroups.

Characteristics of superintendents were the subject of discussion of the third section of the chapter. Trustworthiness, consistency and intelligence were identified as the three most important characteristics in the overall work of a superintendent. These characteristics were also identified to be among the three most important characteristics in the ten task areas along with the following other characteristics: adaptability, approachability, creativity, caring and enthusiasm.

The contingencies variables comparison for superintendent characteristics produced very few differences. The degrees of importance of various characteristics needed in the overall work and task areas work of superintendents did not appear to change very much, regardless of position, size of jurisdiction and type of jurisdiction of respondents.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

This chapter presents an analysis of the data from twenty-nine interviews with Alberta Education managers, deputy superintendents, chairmen, principals and superintendents. The main chapter section headings correspond to the issues that were addressed by the interview questions.

Role Changes in the Superintendency

To supplement information gathered by questionnaires, interview respondents were asked a question pertaining to the role of superintendents: "In terms of tasks, skills and characteristics, how has the position of superintendent changed in recent years?"

Respondents emphasized that the personality of the superintendent is most important. A superintendent needs to be honest, fair, sincere or loyal said 24% of respondents. A total of 14% of respondents showed a preference for an empathetic or caring superintendent. Three other characteristics were each selected by 10% of respondents: a superintendent needs to be approachable or accessible, a superintendent needs to have a sense of humour and a superintendent needs to be responsible or demonstrate good judgement.

Respondents also pointed out that they were not certain whether

personal characteristics could be developed in superintendents. This point is illustrated in the following quotations:

> Characteristics are personality things. I don't know if you can develop them (Superintendent).
>
> I don't even know if you can develop characteristics. I think some of them you can. You can give some of the people skills, but so much of it is a person's basic personality makeup (Alberta Education Manager).
>
> The thing I don't know whether you can develop are the characteristics because those are inherited. When it comes to skills and tasks, I think they can be developed (Alberta Education Manager).
>
> A superintendent's person characteristics cannot be changed, but have already developed along the way through his experiences as a teacher and administrator (Chairman).

Skills were a second area of emphasis as far as personality was concerned. A tally of responses revealed that relating to people and delegating responsibilities were the two most important skills. Relating to people was referred to by 24% of respondents and delegating responsibilities by 10% of respondents.

Respondents believe that today's superintendent also needs a task orientation— 17% of respondents believe this should be evaluation, 14% of respondents believe it should be a sense of direction or having a vision that can be shared with others, 10% believe it is goals and 10% long range planning. The above listing of tasks seems to indicate that there is a present emphasis on policy development and evaluation activities in the Alberta superintendency.

The following comment summarizes the feelings of the majority of respondents to role changes in the superintendency: "The superintendency is becoming more demanding, and superintendents are

being asked to do more things."

Leadership and the Superintendency

Respondents revealed how demanding the superintendency is when they answered the next interview question, "What makes a superintendent a good superintendent?"

A good superintendent is a leader according to 41% of respondents. This statement was made by a cross section of respondents that included two Alberta Education managers, one deputy superintendent, five chairmen, two principals and two superintendents. An analysis of their responses revealed that they chose to speak about leadership by making references to specific skills, characteristics and/or tasks.

A common first response was for a respondent to indicate some skill that was important for a superintendent. The most frequently mentioned skill, mentioned by 34% of interview respondents, was getting along or working with other people. The next most frequently mentioned leadership skills were writing and speaking, and motivating people to follow the superintendent. Each of these skills was referred to by 14% of respondents. Making decisions and political awareness were likewise mentioned by 14% of respondents.

Respondents also considered personal characteristics to be important to superintendents who are considered to be leaders. Twenty-four percent of respondents said a superintendent needs to display integrity by being fair, honest, reasonable or sincere; 14% of respondents said a superintendent needs to be bright or intelligent.

Three slightly less important characteristics, each mentioned by 10% of respondents, were caring, healthy and enthusiastic attributes of superintendents.

Person skills and characteristics were what most respondents talked about, but some references were also made to important leadership tasks. Setting goals, with the main goal being the best education possible for children, was emphasized by a chairman respondent and an Alberta Education manager respondent. Two principals said that a superintendent's presence in schools is important, so that the superintendent knows what is happening in the system. Two other principals highlighted the importance of a leader superintendent establishing liaison among school administrators, teachers and the school board.

Some respondents made specific references to tasks that they did not consider to be leadership activities. "Superintendents are too political and do not change anything," said an Alberta Education manager. Another Alberta Education manager was concerned that some superintendents spend a lot of time in central office and spend a lot of time hiring staff. According to a chairman respondent, superintendents spend too much time on finance. Two principals were concerned that superintendents seem to be business rather than curriculum oriented and have too little involvement in instruction.

For other respondents, leadership seems to be a more complicated interaction of skills, characteristics and/or tasks. The following respondent comments illustrate this interaction:

Leadership is a commitment to good quality education. Leadership

> is an image that a superintendent projects (Alberta Education Manager).
>
> Leadership in being visible and planting ideas in schools (Alberta Education Manager).
>
> Leadership is representing education and building consensus in the school system (Superintendent).
>
> Part of being an educational leader is being a politician. If you want something, you have to go and get it (Chairman).

Throughout the interviews it was emphasized that a superintendent works with people. "Be charismatic" was the way one respondent described the leadership needs of a superintendent.

Expectations for a Superintendent Role

People are believed to have a major impact on the leadership role of the superintendent. This section presents the findings about the research question that inquired, "How do different people affect the work of a superintendent?"

Incumbent Superintendent Expectations

Superintendents believe that they can help determine their own role through the influence they have on the people around them. Three superintendents expressed opinions in this regard:

> A superintendent's job is people. We are dealing with people all the time. We are dealing with the school board, staff, kids, parents, public. All affect the way you operate and how well you relate to your job.
>
> You're influenced by the people around you the same as you influence them.

> People is what education is all about. If you can't work with and through people, you better go home.

This latter superintendent continued the conversation by saying, "The most important decisions I make are people I choose. If I choose wrong people, I can make life pure hell for myself. If I choose the right ones, its much more pleasant." This quote points out that a superintendent can further affect his role by being careful in his hiring practices. Furthermore, "superintendents tend to choose people who share their values," said a deputy superintendent.

Other Expectations

Not only do superintendents influence the position of superintendent, but other people have an influence on the superintendency as well. The impacts of different groups of people seems to vary according to their position in the school organization hierarchy.

Trustees. In Alberta, trustees are the employer of superintendents, so that this group seems to have the greatest impact on the superintendent. One large city superintendent commented,

> I think the greatest impact is from trustees. I think trustees can motivate the superintendent or depress him very quickly. I find that individual trustees as well as the board corporate can influence the energy, the commitment that I give to a particular task.

Other respondent comments revealed how trustees affect superintendents. Trustees interpret the local situation for the

superintendent. Trustees control finances, and this is a factor in the superintendency. Trustees can provide direction to a superintendent, if they become involved in long range planning. A major role of trustees is to develop policy; board policies significantly affect the work of superintendents.

Not only do the work directions of trustees affect superintendents, but the personalities of trustees are also very important. A superintendent respondent contended that it is,

> Very important who you have as trustees. A bad set of trustees can ruin a school system. Trustees who do not get along or are very different in point of view or who have ambitions beyond school board, can just tear an organization apart.

Another superintendent recalled:

> I guess after every election I've dealt with a different board, even though quite often there has been only one trustee change. The personality of the board changes, so people very much affect what you are doing.

The above two opinions provide a context for other comments offered by interview respondents. Since different representatives are usually elected to a board in each election, respondents advised that the superintendent and experienced trustees educate new trustees regarding the operation and organization of the school jurisdiction and that the inservice take place as soon as possible after the elections. They emphasized that a board of education needs to be a cohesive group of trustees.

The county system is unique, said 14% of respondents. There are a larger number of trustees on county boards in comparison to other types of school jurisdictions. The trustees who are also county councillors

have a mandate to deal with both municipal and educational concerns, but priorities of some of these trustee-councillors are more in municipal areas and less in education.

What trustees think of the superintendent as a person is another factor that can affect a superintendent's success. A superintendent needs the trust and confidence of the chairman of the school board, since the chairman directs the work of a superintendent more than other trustees. In this regard a principal made the following statement: "Probably of all the people, the board chairman has the greatest impact on the superintendent. He is the one that most superintendents would be directly accountable to." In fact, the superintendent must be credible to the entire board of trustees including the board chairman.

The changes that are taking place in trustee orientations are yet another factor affecting the superintendent role. Boards are becoming less cohesive groups as a result of the election of one issue trustees. This idea was suggested by an Alberta Education manager who said:

> Times have changed. In recent years, some people run for election on one bloody issue and become one issue trustees. They become elected and do their thing. You got somebody else on the board with his thing. I think boards are less cohesive, have less commonality. They become more political in the sense there is more fighting for scarce resources. They try to build lines of support to garner more resources. So a superintendent does not have an easy time these days.

Deputy and assistant superintendents. A superintendent works closely with deputy and assistant superintendents; consequently, these people are a second influential group. A superintendent respondent noted that superintendents use the people strengths of deputy and/or assistant superintendents. "Assistants have noticeable impacts on

decision-making related to curriculum matters," said a principal. Assistant superintendents are delegated the authority to implement many decisions of superintendents.

Secretary-treasurers. Secretary-treasurers affect the superintendent role, particularly in financial matters. Since secretary-treasurers coordinate the financial operation of school jurisdictions, it is important that a superintendent "understand, collaborate and get along with the secretary-treasurer," commented an Alberta Education manager. Another Alberta Education manager emphasized that superintendents,

> Have got to get along with the secretary-treasurer, the person who runs the financial operation of the system. You have got to be able to relate to that person, and understand, collaborate with that person— understand what input they make into decisions, get along with them as people.

Establishing an effective working relationship is considered to be even more important in counties, due to the dual executive officer organizational structure in most counties, where both superintendent and secretary-treasurer are given equal authority. A principal expressed the following viewpoint in this regard:

> In the county system the secretary-treasurer has a tremendous amount of effect on the work of a superintendent, simply because if you get into a situation where the secretary-treasurer is not anti-education but at best neutral to education, it is very difficult to get a budget that would adequately serve the educational sector.

An Alberta Education manager captured the essence of the feeling of respondents to the degree of influence of secretary-treasurers when he commented:

> The superintendent has to establish a very good relationship with him. When push comes to shove, the secretary-treasurer has probably as much sway with the board as does the superintendent of schools.

Principals. Respondents consider principals to be the most important school-based group who influence the work of superintendents. An Alberta Education manager noted that principals influence superintendent planning and decision-making, either individually or as a group in administrator association meetings. Principals are policy implementors and superintendents must work closely with principals or else they could slow down implementation of new programs.

But, in the opinion of a board chairman, superintendents are more apt to influence principals. This chairman believes,

> The superintendent has a much greater influence on the principalship than the other way around. The superintendent has a great store of knowledge in terms of policies, working with trustees, Alberta Education policies and regulations. These are usually imposed on principals, and principals are placed in a reactive position.

Other respondents believe that the knowledge base of superintendents is being counteracted by an increasing knowledge base of school principals. Principals are becoming better trained, and this change seems to be affecting principal expectations. Superintendents are being challenged by principals, who are demanding more input into school system decision-making. This is likely a trend in most school systems, except maybe not in some large cities; a large city principal indicated that the superintendent has very little contact with city school principals.

In conclusion, "the association of principals and superintendents does give leadership a focus," said one superintendent. A chairman noted that "a working team of principals and superintendent, makes the superintendent look good." Another chairman further elaborated on this team concept in the following quote:

> It's up to a superintendent to have principals who support him, visibly. If he doesn't make changes to those people who cannot, then I think they will affect him. But, I think he has the power to, in my mind, hire and fire anyone in the organization. He should be able to build a team of people who make him look good. If he can't, then I think he pays the price for it, and I think he should.

Teachers. Teachers are another school-based group who affect the work of superintendents. Consultation clauses in teacher contracts make provisions for teachers to be consulted prior to adoption of policies. Board-teacher advisory committees have been formed in a number of school systems, and these groups can affect the superintendent since they have a direct communication line to the board. Teachers can also influence on an individual basis, particularly if they were born in the area in which they are teaching and/or they are related to trustees. A board chairman communicated this latter idea in the following way:

> There is pressure from staff too, because teachers have certain expectations-- in a small jurisdiction, in here especially, where so many people are related. I would say at least twenty-five or thirty percent of teachers are born here, are educated in a university for four years, and return here. They have a strong liaison with community members and board members.

Pressure groups. Community pressure groups affect superintendents.

At times, parents organize into special interest groups to lobby the superintendent and board regarding current issues, such as school boundaries, school closures, gifted programming, French immersion and bussing. Religious groups are likewise very active; Hutterites have their own schools, private schools are increasing in numbers and its supporters are becoming more vocal, other religious groups are challenging curriculum materials being used for public education. Environmental groups are pressuring for curriculum modifications to include material related to sex education, smoking and alcohol.

Then there is another group that is gaining more prominence: the ratepayers who do not have children in school. A deputy superintendent presented the following opinions about this ratepayer group:

> There's another group of people who are becoming more interested in what is happening in the schools and maybe not positively so, and that is the group of taxpayers who do not have any kids in school, who I think in the past have paid their taxes because its a matter of course. The more taxes are increased and the tighter the economic strain is, the more those people are asking questions about what is the school doing and is my money being well spent.

The above groups have expectations, and a superintendent is well advised to take time, be receptive and talk to them. Furthermore, the superintendent needs support of trustees regarding how to deal with various pressure groups.

Provincial government. The provincial government, and specifically Alberta Education managers, are perceived to have had a recent impact on increasing demands in the superintendency. An Alberta Education manager revealed that there has been a centralizing trend, where there

has been a shift from a consultative to a more regulatory role for Alberta Education. The introduction of the Management Finance Plan and its policy orientation into education in Alberta has been accompanied by new requirements for school jurisdictions: that each jurisdiction submit their teacher evaluation policies to Alberta Education, that Alberta Education periodically monitor school systems, that each school jurisdiction submit an annual education report to Alberta Education, that budgeting be done on a school year instead of a calendar year basis.

These requirements have resulted in increased demands being imposed on superintendents. Four superintendent respondents indicated that Alberta Education has been responsible for a paper work increase for superintendents. One superintendent said that Alberta Education demands have placed more stress on superintendents. A board chairman remarked,

> Certainly there are more demands from Alberta Education. The most important thing superintendents can do is give Alberta Education the impression that they are running a good school system and that they are doing the best job they can.

Background Variables

People occupying positions as deputy/assistant superintendents, trustees, principals, teachers, and Alberta Education managers influence the role of superintendent of schools. Even superintendents themselves influence their own role. People participating in pressure group activities also influence the superintendent role.

Although position was the major background variable discussed at

the interviews, references were made to other background variables. As far as the superintendent himself is concerned, 31% of respondents indicated that a background in educational administration, obtained through graduate training, should be a requirement for school superintendents. Experience was identified as another background variable for superintendents; 10% of respondents indicated that practical experience in various positions as a teacher and principal is a must prior to a person becoming a school superintendent. Even the family background of the superintendent is considered to be relevant. A chairman told the researcher that recent superintendent selection procedures have involved applicant spouses in the selection process.

The backgrounds of the general public are believed to influence superintendents. Superintendents are advised to be aware of the socio-economic base, cultural focus and educational level of people in the school jurisdiction. Respondents chose to elaborate on the importance of educational level by saying that people are better educated today. Educated people are considered to be more demanding for information and detail, more progressive and more interested.

Situational Variables

Not only do people affect a superintendent role, but other situational variables in the environment can have effects as well. This section presents the variables suggested by the interview respondents when they were replying to the question: "How does the situation a superintendent is in affect his work?"

Rural and Urban Differences

Educator respondents provided a perspective regarding rural-urban differences. Beginning with a rural perspective, respondents indicated that the rural trustees are predominantly farmers, and since they personally know most people in the community, these trustees are more responsive to public concerns. One superintendent said, "If you are in a rural community, it is most helpful if you have an understanding of rural people, because they do think differently than urban people." A superintendent must understand and be able to converse with the people about agriculture, roads and other rural matters. A superintendent will likely get along better, if he has been raised in a rural area. In order for a superintendent to be respected, it is important that the person be known by rural ratepayers. According to a rural superintendent respondent,

> Rural superintendents are much more responsive to the public than city superintendents. In the rural area, people tend to know each other and if there is a concern they'll talk to the neighbor and you will soon have a group of people who are all concerned, whereas in the city, people tend to not know their neighbors. Maybe they'll phone their neighbors, but that is where it will stop. In the rural area, it isn't going to stop until they are satisfied. They just get bigger and bigger groups together until you pay attention.

The urban contrast is that trustees are better educated, with some board members likely to be professionals. An Alberta Education manager believes that in urban centers there are,

> Probably better qualified boards. Generally, the boards have a better educational background. Not in all cases, but there is a tendency for urban boards to be more sophisticated.

There is a tendency for urban trustees not to become involved in administrative routines, but instead to be concerned with broader areas of plannning and evaluation. This urban superintendent respondent also described urban trustees as receiving a lot of information, and conscientiously reading, processing and analyzing this information. To work with urban trustees, the city superintendent requires a higher level of political skills, remarked another city superintendent respondent.

Size of School Jurisdiction

Size of school jurisdiction is a second situational variable that was referred to in the interviews. This is a variable that is similar to the urban-rural comparison. Large city system respondents consider cities to be unique. They say that city superintendents delegate many responsibilities to central office staff and principals, so that they can concentrate on working with board members to build support for programs. Superintendents have little involvement in instructional programs and spend little time in schools.

In smaller systems, the superintendent will likely be directly involved in most task areas. Therefore, the incumbent will need a broad knowledge background and a wide variety of skills. Many people know the superintendent personally; the superintendent will be closer to his publics. The position is less political and problems appear more manageable.

What is the superintendency really like in a small district? A Superintendent respondent presented a picture of his experiences when

he was superintendent for six small school jurisdictions:

> It seemed what we (superintendent and deputy superintendent) did was pack the car and drive from point A to point B. It was crazy. I can remember, initially, where we didn't even have time to do the board agendas. The secretary-treasurers did that. We showed up for the board meetings and we didn't even know what was on the agenda. I think what happens in that situation is you skim the surface. You just did the bare necessities because you just didn't have time to get involved in a lot of things. We never got into any long range planning. We did just a sort of day by day, year by year kind of thing. We worked very superficially, I found.

Number of Central Office Staff

The amount of support a superintendent has in terms of central office staff is a function of the size of the school system. In the smallest jurisdictions, there is one superintendent with responsibilities in all task areas. As school system size increases in terms of pupils and staff, the numbers of central office staff increase. The superintendent with assistants is able to split the workload and delegate responsibilities to assistants. To be successful, the wise superintendent hires assistants who he can work with and who have needed areas of expertise. An Alberta Education manager put it this way:

> The kind of people you surround yourself with has a lot to do with how effective you are. Some people have been wise, and its not luck, in being able to select other people who work well with you and complement you. If you get key people, good people, they can make a tremendous difference in your effectiveness and leadership.

Financial and Human Resources

Financial resources are a priority area of superintendents and

represent another situational variable affecting today's superintendents. Superintendents are finding it harder to convince board members to spend money. Superintendents need good public relations skills to work with the tough financial entrepreneur secretary-treasurers. A number of respondents pointed out that wealthier systems are easier to administer; there is more flexibility and the superintendent simply gets what is needed in a rich area. When there is less money, it becomes necessary to innovate and prioritize. One rural superintendent offered the following comparison between rich and poor districts:

> I am superintendent for two systems. One system is one of the wealthiest in the province, one system is one of the poorest. There is no question, it is much simpler to administer a wealthy system, because if the crunch really comes, we can afford it. In the poor system, sometimes you have to prioritize and something has to go.

A respondent from a northern Alberta jurisdiction pointed out that financial resources are a problem in northern areas, since these areas usually have a low tax base. In addition, the North has problems in attracting good personnel. Human resources were highlighted as an additional situational factor in northern areas.

Geography

The above resource factors are closely associated with another situational factor— geography. Distance from an urban center was said to 1) determine the availability of financial and human resources, and 2) affect the perspective of what a superintendent is trying to accomplish in an educational system. "People living close to a city

expect that the same programs will be offered as are offered in the city," remarked a chairman respondent. Whether a school jurisdiction is compact or spread out in area, and whether the population is sparse or dense, were also identified as situational factors by interview respondents.

Type of School Jurisdiction

Governance is considered to be a source of a number of situational factors that affects the role of a superintendent. The factor referred to most often is the type of school jurisdiction, whether city, county, school division, town or several districts.

The city district is considered to be an older type of school jurisdiction, which has an entrenched history. According to a city district superintendent respondent, the superintendent is an image in a city district, and the job is largely political in nature.

A town district is small in comparison to a city district. Similar to most city districts, the superintendent is chief executive officer with the secretary-treasurer reporting to the superintendent. The superintendent is known in the community and is in the schools more often.

A school division is a rural type of school jurisdiction. Similar to city and town districts, school divisions are educational governance structures where the superintendent is chief executive officer with the secretary-treasurer reporting to the superintendent.

A county is also a rural type of jurisdiction, but in comparison to a school division, a county is concerned with both municipal and

educational matters. Respondents revealed that county councillors are generally older men and although they are elected as both municipal and school representatives, their major concerns are usually municipal in nature. There can be a split on a board of education between rural councillors and urban town trustees. From a superintendent perspective, it requires greater effort to make education work in a county; superintendents are more politicians and business managers in counties; county superintendents are not the chief executive officer.

Two respondents spoke about their experiences in counties in the following manner:

> Working for a Municipal District gave the superintendent a little more support and background, because he was dealing with a board who were specifically elected to look after education. In a county situation a superintendent has to be more of a politician and more of a business manager, so that he is able to advocate the course of education in the face of strictly county issues— gravel and graders.

> People make a county work or make it not work. The legislation is bad. I think there is a difference in the people that make up the boards. If you look at county councils, they are generally older men, that have been around a long time in positions of power. They're not there for education, they're there because of municipal matters. There is developing in some counties a real split between rural councillors and urban town and village representative.

Public and Separate School Districts

Another governance factor is that there is legal provision for public and separate school districts in Alberta. Separate school districts exist for purposes of religious education, where religion is a priority and values are important. These elements impinge on the role of the superintendent.

Public Elected Boards

A third factor of governance is that trustee elections are held every three years in Alberta. Changes in the board reflect changes in expectations of the public for education, which in turn reflects changes in the role of the superintendents. A board chairman highlighted the impacts of trustee elections on superintendents to be: "You know you're going through a change of bosses every three years, which has to be extremely difficult. It takes quite an adjustment. You have to be politically astute to deal with that."

Media

The last and somewhat different situational factor, identified by three respondents, are media group effects of newspapers, radio and television. Reporters are informed critics and identify newsworthy issues in the community. There is no problem as long as news releases are neutral or positive in nature, but problems can occur when media become negatively oriented toward educational authorities. Then there is a tendency for both the board and superintendent to become tarred with the same communication brush.

A large city principal made the following comments about the media:

> We're in the papers every day in one sense or another. I am sure they're tapping into the superintendent all the time. There is an article about education in every issue of the _____ paper. But it's not all terrific stuff.

Locally Appointed Superintendents

Another situational variable that is characteristic of the Alberta superintendency is the fact that Alberta school boards hire their own superintendents and have done so since 1971. This factor was identified as an issue by questionnaire respondents, which subsequently led to the following question being asked at the interviews: "What are your views concerning locally appointed superintendents?"

Reasons for Local Appointments

Local autonomy was cited as the main reason for having locally appointed superintendents. Two chairmen indicated that boards have a sense of ownership regarding who they hire as their superintendent and superintendents also feel more a part of the district as a result of being hired locally; the superintendent is accountable to the community and board. A principal respondent expressed the opinion that the local superintendency promotes flexibility. The local superintendency promotes integrity, according to a deputy superintendent respondent: "I believe in trustees and they believe in me." A superintendent respondent believes that boards get the kind of individual they want, an individual who shares their philosophy.

Problems in the Local Superintendency

Respondent comments also focused on problems with the local superintendency. An Alberta Education manager commented:

The reason for going to local appointments was to get the

> superintendent out there amongst the teachers and into the school. That is not the way it turned out. Superintendents are still involved in ordering of books and preparation of the budget, not with the quality of instruction in the classroom.

Another Alberta Education manager expressed the concern that there is a lack of a career path in the local superintendency; "I think some of them have been in their job since 1971 and they're going to be in there until they retire. The assistant is getting the job in more attractive areas."

A concern of a board chairman was that the superintendency is becoming a more political position. "Many superintendents, suprisingly, do not feel very secure." This is possibly because there is a lack of due process and natural justice in superintendent contracts.

Five principals voiced concerns, and each of their concerns is included in the following listing:

1. Boards are looking for "yes" men as their superintendents.
2. Superintendents are a political arm of the board.
3. Superintendents act to appease the board.
4. Once a superintendent gets tenure, he is superintendent forever.
5. Superintendents are vulnerable to local politics.
6. Superintendents make decisions on a dollar base rather than an educational base.
7. Superintendents are remote and they are difficult to talk to or move.

A deputy superintendent respondent's concerns focused on the local superintendent as being in a more difficult position than a department

of education appointed superintendent. He noted that there is a lack of security, and political pressure seems to be increasing, particularly in rural areas.

A locally appointed superintendent respondent, who has also been a department appointed superintendent, talked about the difficulty of the job of local superintendent by comparing his experiences as local superintendent to those as a provincial superintendent. The department job was easier, you had job security and people listened to you. Besides, it was useful for Alberta Education to have a government official in a local position. This respondent said:

> I have always been of the view that being a department superintendent may be a little bit easier. Being a government official in a local community was useful for the department. People listened to you. It was a good thing for the government and a good thing for the local area to have a provincially appointed superintendent. Yet, for the most part, I have not allowed being a local appointment compromise my educational views.

Suggested Changes

To tackle issues in the local superintendency, respondents made a number of suggestions for change. "Go back to provincial superintendents," said two principals. The two principals went on to say that provincial superintendents were not as politically pushed around, provincial superintendents were more efficient and there was job security in provincial superintendent positions.

The other respondents were less harsh in their suggestions for change. Most Alberta Education managers and superintendents appeared to favor flexible legislation, where a board has an option to hire their

own superintendent or engage a department superintendent. These arrangements make provision for more movement of superintendents into different situations. In addition, Alberta Education benefits from an arrangement where provincially appointed superintendents are responsible for monitoring of school systems where they are employed.

Both a chairman and a superintendent respondent suggested ongoing evaluation of the superintendent as a desirable change in the local superintendency. The superintendent further indicated that there should be an annual written evaluation.

Although there was some concern expressed about locally appointed superintendents, 93% of the respondents were of the opinion that the concept of locally appointed superintendents should be maintained.

Politics and the Superintendency

Mention was made in the previous section and other sections of this chapter about politics affecting superintendents. This section is a more in depth consideration of politics and the superintendency, that is, it is a presentation of comments provided by respondents when they replied to the question: "In what ways is the superintendency a political position?" The Webster Dictionary defines political as "of or concerned with government" and this meaning seems to reflect what respondents had in mind when they talked about what political environmental influences people and situation have on the tasks, skills and characteristics on the superintendency.

The five respondent groups of Alberta Education managers, deputy

superintendents, chairmen, principals and superintendents agreed that superintendents are politicians. This viewpoint was stated clearly and concisely by a chairman respondent who said: "I think that any time you're dealing with politicians you better be political. I think you've got to be able to be sensitive to individual differences on the board."

Politics appears to be a function of expectations of different groups of people, and trustees seem to have a major political influence. A deputy superintendent respondent presented a viewpoint similar to that of the above chairman respondent when he stated:

> A superintendent has to be a very political person to survive. You have to play it straight and you really have to know your trustees. You almost have to know what each one of their philosophy of life is to be able to anticipate how to handle the board meetings, how to successfully get policies and things through to them, what process they want, because I think the political people are much more demanding than they used to be. You have to know how to deal with it. I think the superintendent spends much more time on it than he used to.

A principal also indicated that trustee demands are increasing; there are demands that the superintendent balance the budget, that the superintendent spend more time consulting the board.

The same principal said that demands from another group are increasing: "It would seem to me that the demands of Alberta Education are mushrooming. I worry that Alberta Education is out of touch with the grass roots and what is going on at the grass roots."
Another principal respondent expressed similar sentiments regarding Alberta Education expectations for superintendents:

> Maybe more political in terms of the Department of Education. The Department seems to be putting much more of a finger in the pie, demanding evaluation, program reviews, special education, those kinds of things. Where one time it was up to the system. You did

> it, you signed a piece of paper that said you were doing it. That was it. Now there's that accountability practice.

There are other political demands as well. A chairman said more pressure groups are coming to the board to let their demands be known, for example, French immersion proponents. Another chairman revealed that teachers are becoming more militant and want to be involved in decision-making: "There's a different attitude of the young teachers. Their attitude is so different than ours was. They are more militant."

Respondents also provided some ideas regarding how superintendents deal with the above demands or expectations. First and foremost, a superintendent needs certain skills. One superintendent respondent indicated that he would not survive without political skills. Two chairmen revealed what political skills are required, saying that a superintendent requires abilities of being able to read people and being able to deal with people. A superintendent must be politically astute said a superintendent. A chairman provided a meaning for this concept saying, "A superintendent who is politically astute has much more chance for survival than someone who can't read the politics of the situation." Another chairman respondent said that a superintendent needs to be sensitive to individual differences on the board. Two Alberta Education respondents indicated that a superintendent uses the skill of influence to affect other poeple.

There appear to be some political task orientations in the superintendency as well. An Alberta Education manager stressed that, "Superintendents must read the political environment in order to expand their value system or zone of acceptance." Superintendents need to

develop a feel for community wants. Superintendents represent the broad spectrum of values in the community.

Not only are people part of the political environment, but the situation is yet another factor in politics and the superintendency. Superintendents are locally appointed in Alberta and expend considerable effort in trying to please their boards. Due to this fact, superintendents are said to be losing their independence. Superintendents are competing for scarce resources, another situational variable in the political role of the superintendent. System size is a third situational variable that is part of the political environment in the superintendency; the superintendent of a large system reacts to the general public, so that people do not feel cut off from public education; the superintendent of a small system uses personal contacts to keep people informed of educational developments.

An Alberta Education manager summed up the issue of politics in the superintendency in the following way:

> The superintendency is political. The superintendency is changing. Part of the reason it is changing is that times have changed. Our society is much more political. Education is a political business and so the superintendent is working in a political environment where there are decisions and struggles going on about who gets what and who pays for it. And that's the political equation. The superintendent is in there in the sense that I suppose what he is interested in doing is getting the maximum amount of resources to do the best job he can do.

Superintendent of the Future

The majority of this chapter has been devoted to a discussion of

the present role of the superintendent. This last section considers speculations of the respondents as to what might evolve in the superintendency of the future. Respondents were answering the question, "What do you see as future developments for superintendents in Alberta?"

Future Oriented Leadership Role

The superintendent of the future will need to project a leadership image. The leader superintendent will have a vision and a mission; you know who you are and where you are going, and so do other people. The superintendent will not just be interested in maintaining the system, but will show direction in further developing the educational system. Leadership means that the superintendent will be more visible; even the students will know what the superintendent does.

To fulfill a leadership role, the superintendent will need certain skills and characteristics. The importance of being change oriented cannot be overemphasized. Along with this skill, superintendents will need skills in human relations-- skills of getting along and relating to others, and being sensitive to staff problems. The personality of the superintendent will be very important in this respect; study respondents indicated that the superintendent will need to be available to staff and be persuasive in dealing with staff.

Task orientations will change as well. The leader will need to espouse a philosophy of education for the system and goals that people can work toward. A major system goal will be teaching students to think for themselves. Policy development will continue to be important in

directing development of the educational system. There will be more public involvement in education, and the superintendent will be actively involved in instruction.

Influences on the Leadership Role

Interviewees also predicted what the influences on a superintendent role will be in the future. People expectations will continue to influence the superintendent. People will demand more and the superintendent will be required to work harder.

There will be more emphasis on superintendent qualifications. Training in educational administration will be a mandatory preservice requirement. University preparation programs will be designed especially for superintendents and include skills development as part of the program. Experience as a principal will be mandatory before a person becomes a superintendent. Working as an intern with another superintendent, will become an expected preservice experience component.

Qualification requirements will probably include a superintendent certificate. Superintendents will probably be required to demonstrate written and practical proficiency in order to become certified.

A new situational factor will likely rise to the forefront. Technology will change education, so that the grade one through twelve public education system will consist of partly school-based activities and partly community and home-based activities, where students will work with computers and other technologies on an individual basis.

Financial restraints will continue to affect superintendents. The

job of superintendent will become more stressful. Superintendencies will become larger as small school units are amalgamated into larger more financially viable school systems.

Selection of superintendents will be based on a broad set of specified criteria. Individuals with good administration potential will be endorsed as superintendent candidates, so that a pool of suitable candidates will be available to assume positions as school superintendents.

Once an administrator does become a superintendent, there will be a greater focus on a continuing assessment of job performance. Provincial and local superintendent evaluation policies will specify that there be regular written superintendent evaluations.

Continuing professional development will be encouraged. The superintendents' association will likely assume a major mandate for professional development. Superintendents, principals, teachers and other educators will be organized into a new professional association of educators, and this association could assume some responsibility for professional development as well. A buddy system for superintendents will be developed as a further professional development mechanism.

There will be a continuing career path for superintendents. Superintendents will be encouraged to rotate positions among and in school districts. The superintendency will be accepted as a fixed short term job appointment, and going back into a school as a teacher or administrator will not be considered a demotion. Superintendents may also have more opportunities to rotate jobs with the department of education.

Summary

The following issues emerged in the interviews: role changes, leadership, politics, and influences of people and situational factors on a superintendent role. As far as role changes were concerned, interviewees indicated that the superintendency is becoming more demanding. The personality of superintendents is most important; superintendents are expected to be honest, caring individuals and to have an ability to relate to people. Leadership in the superintendency was defined by respondents as being an individual preference for certain tasks, skills and/or characteristics. Setting goals, getting along with people and integrity were highlighted as desirable leadership capabilities of superintendents. Politics in the superintendency was discussed as being an emphasis on certain tasks, skills, characteristics and environmental influences.

The more detailed discussion of people and situational variables, reflected an interview respondent special interest in these subject areas. Respondents indicated that various groups of people have expectations for superintendents— superintendents, deputy/assistant superintendents, trustees, principals, secretary-treasurers, teachers, provincial government personnel and pressure groups. Expectations for superintendents are influenced by various situational variables, including rural or urban location, size of school jurisdiction, financial and human resources, type of school jurisdiction, public or separate system, public elected boards and media. The county type of

school jurisdiction and the local appointment of superintendents are situational variables that were emphasized in the Alberta superintendency.

A future role for superintendents will include orientations toward a vision, mission, goals, change and human relations. There will also be new directions in university education and experience requirements, certification, evaluation, professional development and a career path for superintendents.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, the results of the questionnaire and interview data analysis are related to previously published studies. Successive sections of the chapter focus on tasks, skills, characteristics, role of the superintendent, environmental influences and leadership.

Important Tasks

Tasks that involved the superintendent working with trustees were rated as most important by questionnaire respondents in this study. The most important tasks for the superintendent were "participating in meetings that involve the entire board," "establishing channels of communication with trustees" and "identifying priorities for policy development." Interview respondents also emphasized the importance of the superintendent's work with trustees in tasks pertaining to "having a vision that can be shared with others," "long range planning" and "being involved in writing, consulting, referring and interpreting board policies."

The list of tasks in the questionnaire appeared to be comprehensive. Only one task mentioned during the interviews was not covered by the list of tasks contained in the questionnaire--

"superintendent presence in schools." This task appears to be similar to the one presently receiving emphasis in business, namely, "managing by wandering about" (Peters and Austin, 1985: 402).

The most important tasks can be considered on an individual basis. Since superintendents are responsible for numerous jobs, it was more practical to organize the tasks into task areas for ease of consideration. When questionnaire data were organized into task areas, the most important task areas were ranked as follows: (1) Policy Development, (2) Evaluation, (3) Working With Trustees, (4) Public Relations, (5) Managing Staff and (6)Business Management. These same task areas were emphasized by interview respondents. Task areas that were not mentioned in the interviews and which were identified as being of lesser importance in questionnaire data included: (7) Developing School Programs, (8) School Facilities, (9) Student Services and (10) Bus Transportation. The interviews seemed to validate questionnaire findings with respect to the more important and the less important task areas.

The categorization of findings by task areas enabled the researcher to relate the findings of this study to previous research, since the majority of previously published studies reported findings in terms of task areas. Working With Trustees was ranked second in importance in the American superintendency studies of Russell (1979), Ross (1981) and Tippet (1981). Public Relations ranked fourth in Canadian studies by Collins (1958), Ready (1961) and Downey (1976), and in American studies by Matherly (1979) and Ross (1981). Managing Staff was considered to be the second most important task area in Canadian

studies by Collins (1958), Ready (1961) and Downey (1976), and in American studies by Matherly (1979), Russell (1979) and Ross (1981). Business Management (Finance) ranked first in importance in the Tippet (1981) study, and second in the Matherly (1979) study. The above comparisons revealed that the task areas that were considered most important in the past are still considered most important in recent research.

Most of the less important task areas identified in this study were also considered to be less important task areas in previous studies. School Facilities was ranked sixth in the Downey (1976) study, seventh in the Ross (1981) study, and eighth in the Sanford (1976) and Tippet (1981) studies. Canadian studies by Collins (1958) and Ready (1961) reported Developing School Programs (Curriculum) to be first in importance. An American study by Matherly (1979) listed Curriculum third in importance. A study by Ross (1981) reported Curriclum to be ninth in importance out of ten task areas. Developing School Programs appeared to have become a less important task area for superintendents in recent years.

The above comparisons reveal that there were similarities and differences in the specific rankings of the task areas. These rankings might be partially attributed to the present Alberta situation. For example, policy and evaluation activities are presently being emphasized by the Alberta Department of Education, which likely contributed to the high importance that respondents gave to the Policy Development and Evaluation task areas. Superintendents in Alberta are employed by local school boards and it is to be expected that Working

With Trustees would continue to be an important task area. Most superintendents assume a public relations role in a partnership with trustees, which could explain a continued emphasis on Public Relations activities. Working with trustees is considered to be most important, so that Managing Staff and Business Management task areas, which involve the superintendent working with central office staff, principals and teachers, have been relegated to secondary importance. Time does not appear to have changed superintendent orientations regarding School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation task areas. Superintendents continued to delegate responsibilities in these task areas. On the other hand, Program Development has become less important to superintendents over time. An increased professionalization of the teaching force is likely a major contributing factor to less superintendent involvement in curriculum development activities. Secondly, world knowledge is increasing rapidly, superintendents do not likely have the time to assimilate the changes in all subject areas, and by necessity, superintendent Program Development tasks are being assumed by curriculum specialists.

Important Skills

The list of skills contained in the Superintendent Study Questionnaire were identified as important skills in previous research. The questionnaire list of important skills appeared to be comprehensive; only two additional skills were suggested during the interviews, namely, "managing time" and "negotiating."

According to questionnaire respondents, the top ten skills in the general work of a superintendent, listed from most important to least important, were making decisions, delegating responsibilities, being sensitive to feelings and needs of others, synthesizing information, relating to others, resolving conflicts, analyzing information, taking risks, using theory and introducing changes. Skills mentioned in the interviews were also ranked and resulted in the following list: relating to others, influencing others, speaking clearly, writing clearly, delegating responsibilities and introducing changes. A comparison of these lists shows that human relations skills were considered to be most important to the work of a superintendent both by questionnaire and interview respondents. Delegating responsibilities and relating to others were specific human relations skills that were common to both lists. Introducing changes was another skill that was considered to be important by both questionnaire and interview respondents.

The findings of this study are supported by previous research. Human relations skills were identified as being important in the largest number of the reviewed studies, including three Canadian studies by Sampson (1965), Campbell (1969) and Downey (1976), and four American studies by Vigil (1977), Matherly (1979), Russell (1979) and Cunningham and Hentges (1982). Communication skills (speaking clearly and writing clearly) were identified as being important in five studies: Sampson (1965), Downey (1976), Tippet (1981), Schmitz (1982) and Wooten (1983). Information skills were identified as being important in four studies: Sampson (1965), Campbell (1969), Downey

(1976) and Schmitz (1982).

The above studies investigated overall skills requirements of superintendents. The questionnaire part of this study extended previous research by indicating that different skills were perceived to be associated with different task areas. Human relations skills of relating to others were perceived to be one of the three most important skills in the Public Relations and Managing Staff task areas. Being sensitive, which is another human relations skill, was considered to be first in importance in the Managing Staff task area, and second in importance in the Student Services task area. The communication skill of speaking clearly was considered to be the second most important skill in the Public Relations task area. Information skills of gathering information, synthesizing information, interpreting information and analyzing information, were the most important in Policy Development, Evaluation and Working With Trustees. Delegating responsibilities, making decisions and organizing were the three most important skills in the Business Management, School Facilities and Bus Transportation task areas. In fact delegating responsibilities was selected as one of the three most important skills in the following five task areas: Business Management, School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation. Not only were superintendents expected to delegate responsibilities, they were also expected to assume responsibility (make decisions) for work accomplished. Making decisions was selected as one of the top three skills along with delegating responsibilities in Business Management, School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation task areas.

These findings reflect an accepted guideline in educational administration that an administrator delegates responsibility for many tasks but is ultimately responsible for the accomplishment of all tasks.

The findings, that different skills are important for different task areas, and that some skills are more important than others, appear to be valid, to those who have had considerable experience as a superintendent or in working closely with superintendents. These findings appear to reflect reality.

Important Characteristics

Seven characteristics were identified as being important to the general performance of superintendents by both questionnaire and interview respondents. Superintendents were expected to be consistent, trustworthy, adaptable, caring, intelligent, approachable and confident. Five of these characteristics, or equivalent traits, have been identified as important characteristics in recent studies of the superintendency and/or of business executives: consistent by Musella (1982); trustworthy by Downey (1976), Bennis (1984), Luce (1984) and Musella (1982); caring by Matherly (1979); intelligent by Sanford (1976); confident by Krepps (1982), Musella (1982) and Scally (1982). Bass (1981), in an extensive review of studies of leader personal characteristics, made reference to three of the above characteristics: "adaptable" was identified in ten studies, "intelligent" was identified in forty-eight studies and "self-confidence" was identified in

forty-five studies. "Approachable" was the only characteristic of the above seven that was not referenced in previous research findings.

This study extended previous knowledge by producing findings that indicated what characteristics were associated with different task areas. Respondents selected three different characteristics to be most important for eight of ten task areas. Only for the two task areas of Policy Development and School Programs, were the same characteristics, (intelligence, creativity and adaptability), identified as the three most important characteristics. These latter two task areas are concerned with the development of new information, so that it is to be expected that the same attributes will be necessary for the two task areas. Another finding was that some characteristics were selected among the top three characteristics more frequently than others. "Consistency" was selected for six task areas, "adaptability" for five task areas, "intelligence" and "approachability" for four task areas, and "trustworthiness" for three task areas. Respondents seemed to be able to differentiate among the characteristics and identify the most important characteristics in each task area.

The above characteristics were not only considered to be most important in individual task areas, but the same characteristics were also among the top ten characteristics in the general work of a superintendent. This supports the study's findings regarding what personal characteristics were most important to a school superintendent.

If there is a set of characteristics that are necessary to superintendent performance, then superintendents should possess these

characteristics. Interview respondents made a significant point in this regard suggesting that characteristics were inherent in an individual's personality and could not be developed to any great extent. These opinions were substantiated in a recent review of research by Costa and McCrae:

> Today we have the benefits of two decades of new evidence on this question (of characteristics) including the results of a number of major longitudinal studies published in the last six years. On the basis of this new data, a new conclusion is in order: in the course of normal aging, there is strong evidence of stability in the individual, and no consistent evidence at all of systematic change with age (1985: 31).

Costa and McCrae went on to say that an individual's personality stabilizes in early adulthood and does not normally change after approximately age thirty. Assuming that the above conclusion is valid, then the assessment of a candidate's personality becomes very important during the hiring process, if in fact, characteristics are related to the way a superintendent performs.

Role of Superintendent

The interviews drew the attention of the researcher to relationships among tasks, skills and characteristics. Some interviewees identified certain tasks as being most important, some interviewees identified certain skills to be most important and some interviewees identified certain characteristics as being most important. The respondents seemed to imply that the role of superintendent was a complex interaction of tasks, skills and

characteristics. This idea was not as apparent, but was also implied in the questionnaire findings. Different skills and different characteristics were identified as being important for each task area. There seemed to be a requirement for a different interaction of personal skills and characteristics in each task area.

Another finding was that "person" elements of the role appeared to be more important than the "task" elements of the role. Interview respondents chose to spend more time talking about skills and characteristics and less time talking about tasks. Respondents identified more skills and characteristics than they did tasks.

Questionnaire respondents revealed that the importance of the three elements of role was skills first, characteristics second and tasks third. The relative importance of skills, characteristics and tasks is a concept that does not seem to have been investigated in previous superintendency studies. The main concern of other researchers appears to have been studying tasks, skills and/or characteristics as isolated concepts.

Environmental Influences

In addition to investigating the role of the superintendent in terms of important skills, characteristics and tasks, the study also investigated influences that the environment seemed to impose on the superintendency.

Expectations

Expectations help determine the role of superintendent of schools. Superintendents themselves have expectations for a superintendent role as do other people. This study investigated the expectations of superintendents as well as others who work most closely with superintendents.

Superintendents, deputy superintendents and Alberta Education managers held similar expectations for the role of superintendent. Board chairmen had a number of expectations for the role of superintendent that were different from the aforementioned groups. Expectations of principals were also different from those of superintendents, deputy superintendents and Alberta Education managers. Expectations of principals were also different from those of board chairmen. For example, principals did not appear to desire a high degree of superintendent involvement in evaluation activities, whereas chairmen did.

Further support for these findings was reported in previous research. The most commonly reported finding was that there were significant differences in expectations between superintendents and board chairmen, trustees, principals, teachers and professors. Out of twenty-six studies that compared task expectations for superintendents, twenty-three reported significant differences among subgroups (Baker, 1983; Bart, 1980; Behner, 1979; Bosley, 1979; Casburn, 1975; Dodson, 1981; Downey, 1976; Fast, 1968; Jacobson, 1981; Johnson, 1983; Kinn, 1980; Kumagai, 1975; Lilley, 1975; McBride, 1975; McLaughlin, 1977; Phillips, 1981; Ready, 1961; Sanford, 1976; Sherk, 1964; Smith, 1975;

Smith, 1976; Winkler, 1975 and Worthington, 1980).

The questionnaire data also confirmed that superintendents, deputy superintendents, Alberta Education managers, chairmen and principals had varying expectations for skills and characteristics requirements for superintendents. The range of differences were greater than twenty percent among the subgroups for a number of skills and characteristics in the general work and in task areas work of superintendents.

Interviewees suggested reasons why expectations for tasks, skills and characteristics were oriented the way they were in the questionnaire data. Superintendents stressed that they worked with people, and this response substantiated the human relations emphasis in questionnaire data. Interview respondents commented that superintendents hired people who held similar values to themselves. A personality similarity could at least partly account for deputy superintendent questionnaire expectations being similar to superintendent expectations. In setting directions for education in the Province, Alberta Education managers work in similar areas of policy, evaluation and monitoring as do superintendents, which could partly account for the similarity in expectations of Alberta Education Managers and Superintendents.

The interviews established that board chairmen provided most of the work directions for superintendents. This finding suggests that careful consideration must be given to chairmen expectations, particularly in task areas where chairmen expectations are likely to be different than superintendent expectations.

According to the interview respondents, principals are demanding

more input into school system decision-making. Assuming that this factor is true, then superintendents need to consult with principals and attempt to clarify what superintendent roles will be. Task orientations in Evaluation, School Programs and Student Services will be particularly relevant, since principals appeared to have lower expectations for superintendents in these task areas.

Superintendents were advised to pay attention to expectations of other groups as well. Interview respondents noted that secretary-treasurers influence the superintendent role in financial matters; that parents, religious and environmental pressure groups present important issues to the superintendent and board; and that taxpayers without children in school are increasing in number and are becoming more vocal. There appears to be a need to gather more information about expectations of these other groups.

Background Characteristics

Interview and questionnaire respondents worked in different jobs in education. Their work positions seemed to account for the similarities and differences in subgroup expectations for a superintendent role.

Another background characteristic that interview respondents emphasized, was the university education of superintendents. The respondents seemed to be in favor of increasing minimum university education qualifications for superintendents.

Experience was considered to be an important background characteristic for superintendents. Again respondents favored

increasing minimum qualifications, suggesting that superintendents be required to have prior experiences as teachers and school administrators.

Situational Influences

Among the situational sources of influences on the superintendent role, considered were size of jurisdiction, governance and media.

Size. An important situational factor, investigated in both questionnaires and interviews, was the size of the school jurisdiction. Questionnaire findings revealed that the importance of various tasks and task areas varied with the size of the school jurisdiction. In jurisdictions of over 500 teachers, superintendents tended to emphasize Policy Development, Working With Trustees and Public Relations tasks. Interview respondents provided reasons for the differences when they said that large city system superintendents delegated many tasks so that they had time to work directly with trustees. In contrast, superintendents in smaller systems worked in most task areas and spent a lesser amount of time with trustees.

Eight of the superintendency studies reviewed in Chapter Two employed a size of districts comparison. Studies by Baker (1983), Douglas (1975), Lepley (1980), Smith (1976) and Vigil (1977) reported significant differences in task expectations that were attributed to school district size.

Other size-related variables were identified in this study that did not seem to be mentioned in past research. The number of central

office staff in a school jurisdiction was considered to be related to the school system size. Superintendents of larger systems have assistants who are responsible for areas such as curriculum; therefore, the superintendent does not need as specific a knowledge base. Financial resources appeared to be another size-related variable. Interviewees indicated that larger systems generally have more financial resource flexibility, and said that this condition made the job of the superintendent easier. Geographical location was yet another factor related to the size variables. School systems located in or near urban centers were considered to be richer in financial and human resources, and their residents were considered to be demanding more educational services. These additional size-related variables appear to have the potential to influence a superintendent's role. Therefore, they should be taken into account when the role of superintendent is being defined.

Governance. Governance was also identified as a situational variable. An important governance factor in Alberta is the fact that superintendents are hired by school boards. Interview respondents commented that the policy of local appointments contributed to a lack of a continuing career path, lack of security and political vulnerability of Alberta superintendents. The practice of local appointments appears to be a source of continuing problems for Alberta superintendents. The problems appear to have become more acute since they were first identified in the Downey study of 1976.

The type of system of governance is also an important situational

factor with respect to governance. There appeared to be major differences between cities and other types of systems. City superintendents delegated many responsibilities and were perceived to be politically oriented to working with trustees. In town, several district, division and county superintendencies, there was more emphasis on human relations skills, probably because superintendents were required to work more directly with people in schools and in the community.

Interview respondents emphasized that more effort is required from a superintendent to make education work in a county. There are both educational and municipal priorities in counties that require superintendents to be politically astute and business oriented. There are unitary governance arrangements in some counties where a superintendent is chief executive officer of the board; however, dual governance arrangements where a superintendent shares executive functions with the secretary-treasurer is more common. Downey reported similar anomalies with the Alberta county system in 1976. The county system seems to continue to be a challenge to Alberta superintendents.

Several district superintendencies, in which a superintendent is responsible for the various tasks associated with a number of different school boards, also present challenges to superintendents. Superintendent responsibilities include attendance at a number of board meetings and coordination of numerous activities in several school jurisdictions. Because the number of central office staff is limited, the majority of work must be carried out by the superintendent. This results in a very heavy work load.

The legal provision for separate school systems was identified as an another governance factor. The increase in the number of separate school systems, which in most cases take students away from public systems, has resulted in some systems becoming smaller. It is perceived that this trend seems to be affecting the effectiveness and efficiency of Alberta school systems.

The fact that school boards are publicly elected every three years, was yet another governance factor that was talked about at the interviews. After each election, there are usually some new trustees. Depending on the number and orientations of the newly elected trustees, the influences on the role of a superintendent can be substantial.

Media. Last and by no means the least in importance, a superintendent can be affected by the orientation of the media to the educational system. Interview respondents emphasized that negative news releases about a school system can affect the work of a superintendent to the point of making the job untenable. The influences of the media appear to have been increasing, possibly due to increased reliance on the media in our technological society.

That situational variables influence the role of a superintendent, is certain. However, the amount of influence that a given set of factors has on the role of a superintendent appears unique to each superintendency.

In summary, the role of a superintendent seems to be a function of people expectations, of background characteristics and of situational variables.

Leadership and the Superintendency

Superintendents are expected to display leadership, since they are chief educational administrators. What is leadership? The Webster dictionary defines leadership as being a capacity to guide others. In this study the dictionary definition was extended by suggesting that the capacity to guide others is related to various combinations of skills, characteristics and tasks. This concept of leadership was supported by interview responses. When respondents were asked about leadership in the superintendency, a variety of indicators were proposed. Some respondents said introducing changes, relating to others, and being sensitive to the feelings and needs of others revealed that a superintendent was a leader (a skills emphasis). Others said being adaptable, approachable and persistent were examples of leadership (a characteristics emphasis). Further indicators of leadership were suggested to be: setting goals, public involvement, visiting with staff and involvement in instruction (a tasks emphasis). Other respondents said leaders were charismatic, visible and political, and had a vision and mission (a combined skills, characteristics and tasks emphasis).

The above analysis suggests that perceptions of what leadership is vary from person to person. Some respondents believed a superintendent is a leader if he possesses certain skills or characteristics or if he is oriented to certain tasks. Other preferences appeared to be more complex combinations of skills, characteristics and task orientations. Furthermore, the preference for certain skills, characteristics and/or

tasks seemed to change from situation to situation.

This view of leadership has been substantiated in recent reviews of leadership research. Downey and Ingram (1987) wrote about the eclectic view of leadership as being a composite of attributes, tasks and exchanges in a particular context, and pointed out that theorists of this orientation believed that leadership differed from situation to situation. The Downey and Ingram report made references to a recent and extensive review of leadership research by Gill (1987), where Gill made the following statement that supported the above notion of leadership:

> Both Bass (1981) and Yuhl (1981) noted that the recognition of the salient role of personality traits and skills in leadership does not indicate a return to the earlier trait approach which attempts to identify one universal set of leadership traits, but represents a useful alternative to extreme situationally deterministic views that have developed in leadership research (1987: 8).

Gill concludes that there is a "trend toward more exploration of broader conceptualizations of leadership" (1987: 52). This researcher has attempted a broader conceptualization that seems to be in keeping with this trend.

Others also proposed a broader difinition of leadership that incorporated a combined skills, characteristics and tasks emphasis. Researchers Peters and Austin indicated that school leaders needed to have "vision, energy, empathy, persistence, passion, attention to detail and a picture of a goal" (1985: 409-410). Bennis and Nanus (1985) conducted research of ninety top leaders and reported that leaders needed to have a vision, human handling skills and characteristics of persistence, commitment and consistency. The Governor's 1991 Report on Education (1986) suggested that leaders

should have a vision which they can translate into goals. A recently released report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration recommended that educational leadership be redefined. This report offered the following suggestions: that superintendent leaders must provide a vision; that superintendent leaders be skilled in working with groups, in speaking, in writing and in resolving conflicts; and that superintendent leaders be capable of working on tasks related to "selecting staff, planning for the future, building the budget, constructing and maintaining the school plant" (1987: 7).

In general, the ideas presented in this study in terms of important skills, characteristics, tasks and environmental contingencies, seem to be supported by recent research.

Summary

Both the questionnaire and interview findings suggested that the most important tasks involved working with trustees. When tasks were organized into task areas, the questionnaire and interview findings were found to be similar to previous research findings. The most important task areas were identified as Policy Development, Evaluation, Working With Trustees, Public Relations, Managing Staff and Business Management; the less important task areas were identified as School Programs, School Facilities, Student Services and Bus Transportation.

Human relations skills, communication skills and information skills were considered to be most important to a superintendent. Results of this study and previous studies agreed that the most

important characteristics of a superintendent were: trustworthiness, adaptability, care, intelligence and confidence. Respondents selected different skills and characteristics to be most important in each task area which suggests that there seems to be a complex interaction of skills, characteristics and tasks. Questionnaire respondents indicated that skills and characteristics were more important than tasks.

The superintendency is influenced by the environment. People are part of the environment and their expectations help determine a superintendent role. The analysis of data indicated that task expectations of superintendents, deputy superintendents and Alberta Education managers were similar and that expectations of chairmen and principals were different from each other, as well as from the aforementioned subgroups. The majority of previous studies have also found significant differences in task expectations between superintendents and board chairmen, trustees, principals, teachers and professors. This study also found differences in expectations among the subgroups for expected superintendent skills and characteristics. People and the positions they occupy seem to be a major factor in determining a superintendent role.

Situational variables were a second category of environmental influences that were investigated in this study. The importance of various tasks and task areas varied with increasing size of the school jurisdiction. Previous researchers also reported significant differences in task expectations that were attributed to school district size. Local appointment of superintendents by school boards and the county system of government were identified as two other

important situational variables affecting the Alberta superintendency.

The interview data seemed to suggest that leadership is an emphasis on certain skills, characteristics and tasks, and that the definition of leadership varied from person to person. Furthermore, the preference for certain skills, characteristics and tasks seemed to change from situation to situation. Recent theorists support the above conceptualization as being an eclectic view of leadership.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This last chapter summarizes the purposes, procedures and findings of the study. The conclusions, which are based on the findings, are considered in terms of implications for theory, for the practice of educational administration and for further research.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to investigate the role of the school superintendent with respect to the relative importance of, and relationships among the variables of tasks, skills and characteristics.

The study considered the role of superintendent of schools in the context of five research questions:

1. What tasks are important in the work of superintendents?
2. What skills are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?
3. What personal characteristics are important for performing the tasks of superintendents?
4. What is the relative importance of tasks, skills and characteristics in the work of superintendents?
5. How do contingency variables influence the tasks, skills and personal characteristics considered important in the

work of superintendents?

A questionnaire was constructed to obtain data required to answer these questions. The School Superintendent Study questionnaire, developed as the major data collection instrument, consisted of four sections. Section One asked respondents to rate the levels of importance of fifty-eight tasks. In Section Two respondents were asked to select the three most important skills and the three most important characteristics in the general work of superintendents as well as in ten task categories. Respondents were asked to rate the degree of importance of each of tasks, skills and characteristics in Section Three. Section four was designed to gather information regarding contingency variables.

All Alberta superintendents, deputy superintendents and school board chairmen were asked to participate in the study, along with a sample of principals and Alberta Education managers. A total of 534 out of 648 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 82.4%.

Interviews were used as a second method of data collection. Twenty-nine interviews were conducted with selected members of the above respondent subgroups.

To assist in the analysis of the questionnaire data, means were calculated for tasks data, frequencies and percentages for skills and characteristics data, and means for data pertaining to the overall importance of skills, characteristics and tasks. An analysis of variance was carried out to analyze contingency variables information, and a content analysis was performed on the interview data.

Findings

The findings in the study are presented below in point form, categorized according to tasks, skills, characteristics, relationships of tasks, skills and characteristics, and general contingency variables.

Tasks

1. The most important task areas of a superintendent were ranked as follows: 1) Policy Development, 2) Evaluation, 3) Working With Trustees, 4) Public Relations, 5) Managing Staff and 6) Business Management.

2. The three most important tasks of fifty-eight tasks pertained to a superintendent's work with trustees in "participating in meetings that involve the entire board, establishing channels of communication with trustees and identifying priorities for policy development." These tasks were included in the Working With Trustees, Public Relations and Policy Development task areas.

3. The less important task areas of a superintendent were ranked as follows: 7) Developing School Programs, 8) School Facilities, 9) Student Services and 10) Bus Transportation.

4. The three least important tasks of fifty-eight tasks were "promoting time efficiency in bus transportation, planning for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system, and coordinating planning of student health services and programs." These tasks were included in the Bus Transportation, School

Programs and Student Services task areas.

5. There were similarities and differences in task expectations for superintendents among the subgroups. There were no significant differences among Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents and Alberta Education Managers. Expectations of Principals were significantly different than expectations of Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Alberta Education Managers and/or Board Chairmen for seventeen tasks. Most of the differences were in two task areas where Principals assumed less importance for five Evaluation tasks and three School Programs tasks. Board Chairmen held expectations that were significantly different than expectations of Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Alberta Education Managers and/or Principals for eleven tasks. Most of the differences were in the Public Relations task area, where Chairmen assumed less importance for five tasks.

6. A size of school jurisdiction comparison produced significant differences in task expectations for thirty-nine tasks. Most of the differences were in the Very Small and Very Large school jurisdiction categories. Very Small jurisdictions of less than fifty teachers assumed less importance for four Working With Trustees tasks and three Public Relations tasks. Very Large jurisdictions of more than 500 teachers assumed less importance for five Evaluation tasks, five Student Services tasks, four Managing Staff tasks, four Student Programs tasks and four School Facilities tasks.

7. A type of school jurisdiction comparison produced significant differences in task expectations for twenty-four tasks. Most of the differences were in the City school jurisdiction subgroup. Cities

assumed less importance to five Evaluation tasks, three Managing Staff tasks, and two tasks in each of Working With Trustees, School Programs and Student Services. The Counties subgroup assumed less importance to two Public Relations tasks. The Several Districts subgroup assumed less importance to three Public Relations tasks.

Skills

8. The three most important skills in the overall work of a superintendent were making decisions, delegating responsibilities and being sensitive to feelings of others.

9. Different skills were considered to be most important in the ten task areas. Information skills were considerd to be most important in Policy Development, Evaluation and Working With Trustees task areas. Human relations skills were assumed to be most important in Public Relations, Managing Staff and Student Services task areas. Delegating responsibilities, making decisions and organizing were the three most important skills in Business Management, School Facilities and Bus Transportation task areas.

10. The relative order of importance of the skills was similar in each task area for the five position subgroups.

Characteristics

11. The three most important characteristics in the overall work of a superintendent were trustworthiness, consistence and intelligence.

12. Three different characteristics were selected to be most important in eight of ten task areas.

13. Consistency, adaptability, intelligence, approachability, trustworthiness and caring were selected to be among the three most important characteristics more frequently than other characteristics in the ten task areas.

14. The relative order of importance of the characteristics was similar in each task area for the five position subgroups.

Relative Importance of Skills, Characteristics and Tasks

15. The relative order of importance of role elements was found to be skills first, characteristics second and tasks third.

16. Leadership in the superintendency was defined by individual expectations for certain skills, characteristics and/or tasks.

Other Contingencies

17. The local appointment of superintendents and the county system of governance were identified as most important situational variables in the Alberta superintendency.

18. Other situational variables influencing the Alberta superintendency included rural or urban location, public or separate system, public elected boards and media.

Conclusions

Conclusions for the study are based on the above findings. The conclusions are organized into categories that reflect the research questions.

What Tasks are Important in the Work of Superintendents?

Work with trustees is most important to a superintendent role, while work with students, curriculum, facilities and transportation tasks is less important. The levels of perceived importance vary among the respondents. For example, Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, and Alberta Education Managers appear to have similar task expectations for superintendents. Principals and Chairmen hold expectations for superintendents that are different to each other and are different than expectations of Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents and Alberta Education Managers.

What Skills are Important for Performing the Tasks of Superintendents?

Human relations skills are considered to be most important for the overall work of a superintendent of schools. A different mix of skills appears to be important in each task area. Some skills are selected more frequently than other skills, which suggests superintendents use some skills more frequently than other skills. Respondents seem to agree about the order of importance of the skills in each task area, which leads one to conclude that people know what actions are needed in each task area and what actions are produced by application of each skill.

What Personal Characteristics are Important for Performing the Tasks of Superintendents?

Consistency, trustworthiness, adaptability, caring, intelligence,

approachability, confidence and creativity seem to be the characteristics that are most important in the overall work and task areas work of superintendents. A superintendent will likely be expected to display these characteristics more often than other characteristics. A different mix of characteristics is important in each task area. Respondent subgroups agree about the order of importance of the characteristics in each task area. Respondents likely have similar concepts of what each personal characteristic means and have similar opinions about the importance of each attribute in each task area.

What is the Relative Importance of Tasks, Skills and Characteristics in the Work of Superintendents?

Skills and personal characteristics are considered to be more important than tasks. In terms of the role of a superintendent, just performing tasks is not sufficient, but how they are performed by application of skills and personal characteristics is equally or perhaps more important.

A leadership role appears to be a preference for certain skills, characteristics and/or tasks that varies from individual to individual. Leadership can be defined to be a preference for important skills, characteristics and/or tasks.

How Do Contingency Variables Influence the Tasks, Skills and Personal Characteristics Considered Important in the Work of Superintendents?

The role of school superintendent is determined by expectations. Work position seems to be a major factor that influences expectations

for important tasks, skills and characteristics.

The situation in which respondents work also influences their expectations. Size of school jurisdiction appears to be the most influential situational variable, particularly for task expectations. Type of school jurisdiction is a second situational variable that influences task expectations. In Alberta, expectations for county superintendents are different than expectations in the other types of school jurisdictions. Another situational variable that continues to influence the superintendency in Alberta, is the appointment of superintendents by school boards. Other situational variables that influence the superintendency in Alberta, include rural or urban location, public or separate system, public elected trustees and media. There are many different contingency variables that can influence the superintendency, and therefore, there are many possible combinations of contingency variables. A conclusion that can be drawn is, the mix of contingency variables that influences a particular superintendency appears to be unique to that superintendency.

Implications

The findings and conclusions of this study have implications for theory, for the practice of educational administration and for further research.

Implications for Theory

This study supports the concept of role as being an interaction of

tasks, skills and personal characteristics. Another concept growing out of this study is that different skills and personal characteristics are important in different task areas. Agreement among respondent groups regarding which skills and characteristics are most important in a given task area, helped establish the plausibility of the aforementioned idea.

As far as contingency theory is concerned, this study confirms past research, and becomes another study that found work position to be a very important background characteristic that influenced expectations of respondents. Study findings also implied that there are numerous situational variables that can influence expectations.

Study findings support an eclectic view of leadership. Leadership is defined by important tasks, skills and personal characteristics. A second idea is that preferences for important tasks, skills and personal characteristics vary from individual to individual. A third idea is that leadership is believed to be influenced by contingency variables.

Implications for Practice

A major implication for the practice of educational administration is that there should be a closer examination of the specific skills, characteristics and tasks required by superintendents. Superintendents, Alberta Education personnel, trustees and possibly other stakeholders could be involved in the development of a basic role description for superintendents of schools that indicates what skills, characteristics and tasks are considered basic to the superintendency.

A basic role description could be used as an information base in developmental activities at both provincial and local levels. At a provincial level, a basic role description could be useful in considering current issues in the superintendency. Interview respondents in this study identified university education, experience, leadership, evaluation, recruitment, professional development and legislation to be issues in the superintendency. The Alberta Department of Education could initiate a study of these issue areas in cooperation with stakeholder groups to develop recommendations regarding the above issue areas. For example, superintendents, Alberta Education personnel and university personnel could be involved in activities to determine what changes should be made in university programs to accommodate school superintendents. The role of universities and other organizations in developing theoretical knowledge and skills of superintendents needs to be formalized. Experience is another important issue area and superintendents, trustees, Alberta Education personnel and other stakeholders could be consulted regarding experience requirements for superintendents. Results of issues considerations could bring about changes in legislation, regulations and policies of the provincial government aimed at enhancing the future role of the Alberta superintendent of schools.

At a local level, each superintendent could utilize a provincial framework and the tasks, skills and personal characteristics identified in this study to develop a role description for his own school jurisdiction. In this regard, it is important that superintendents conduct a self-assessment of their role and consider the expectations

of other groups, especially trustees who are their employees. Other key people who should have input into a superintendent role description are deputy superintendents, principals and secretary-treasurers. Although teachers and community pressure groups may not work as closely with superintendents, these groups have expectations for superintendents and therefore could be consulted as well. There will not likely be role consensus but involvement of various groups should lead to a better understanding of what skills, characteristics and tasks are important in a particular superintendency.

A role description should take into account the influence of situational variables. For example, the role of superintendent will likely need to be defined differently for different sized school jurisdictions. The county system has been identified as a special case and will continue to be a source of problems for superintendents until such time as the chief executive officer issue is resolved. Other potential influences could be financial resource availability of the school jurisdiction, media, number of central office staff, public or separate system and rural or urban location.

Assuming that evaluation of performance is considered to be an important part of a superintendent's job, then a role description that takes into account situational influences could in turn be used in developing a superintendent evaluation instrument. An evaluation of superintendent performance should be based on priorities that have been agreed to by board and superintendent at the beginning of an assessment period. It does not seem feasible or fair to assess all the skills, characteristics and tasks identified in this study at any one time. A

more manageable approach seems to be to select priority skills, characteristics and tasks, set performance standards for these priority skills, characteristics and tasks, and then evaluate the superintendent on his attainment of results toward the performance standards.

Implications for Research

A first implication for research is that there is a need to define more clearly the role of school superintendents. Further studies could be conducted using the skills, characteristics and tasks identified in this study, so that over a period of time a more complete list of important performance criteria for superintendents is developed. More emphasis needs to be accorded to researching skills and characteristics, especially investigations of which skills and characteristics are important in performing different tasks and developing instruments to measure individual personal characteristics and the extent of skills development.

Indepth observations and interviews of superintendents could help to clarify what a leadership role in the superintendency is perceived to be. Politics in the superintendency, should be included as a sub-problem in future superintendent leadership studies.

Interviews could be conducted with superintendents, deputy superintendents, principals, chairmen and Alberta Education managers to investigate the reasons for the similarities and differences in expectations that were identified in this study. Possibly a number of the differences can be reconciled, so that there would be only a minimum number of areas of role conflicts. The interviews might be

extended to include teachers and secretary-treasurers, in an attempt to obtain other insights into role expectations for superintendents.

The findings in this study indicated that there is a lack of information about the influences of situational variables on the superintendency. There appears to be a need for further research to study situational variables in the superintendency. Some procedures might be developed, that will enable researchers to ascertain what situational variables are influencing a given superintendent. Researchers might also be able to measure the amount of influence different situational factors have on the superintendency.

This study might be considered to be a springboard for future researchers who are interested in studying skills, characteristics and tasks and relationships among the role elements. This study could be replicated by using the study questionnaire in other provinces. Studies carried out in other locations could enhance the conclusions reached in this study. There should also be future replications of this study in Alberta, to re-identify what skills, characteristics and tasks are considered to be important at a particular point in time. The world today is changing more rapidly than it has in the past and there seems to be more of a need to periodically adjust a superintendent role description to new technologies and altering social and economic conditions.

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APPENDIX A

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

The items in this survey relate to factors that are important in the work of school superintendents. Please answer all the questions. If you wish to comment on any questions or qualify your answers, please feel free to use the space in the margins. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

Confidentiality of responses is assured.

Thank you for your help.

SECTION I TASKS

Section one is concerned with various tasks that are important in the work of a superintendent

(Indicate how important you think each of the tasks is, by circling a number for each item, or by circling an "N", if you think a superintendent should not become involved.)

Please do not write in this column 1-4

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE

1 = VERY HIGH
2 = HIGH
3 = MODERATE
4 = LOW
5 = VERY LOW

N = SHOULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED

How important is it for a superintendent to ...

1.	Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	1	2	3	4	5	N	5
2.	Establish channels of communication with students	1	2	3	4	5	N	6
3.	Monitor student achievement results	1	2	3	4	5	N	7
4.	Coordinate preparation of an annual budget	1	2	3	4	5	N	8
5.	Predict future building needs and trends	1	2	3	4	5	N	9
6.	Identify priorities for policy development	1	2	3	4	5	N	10
7.	Monitor teacher awareness of and adherence to provincial programs of study	1	2	3	4	5	N	11
8.	Coordinate personnel recruitment	1	2	3	4	5	N	12
9.	Coordinate planning for student safety	1	2	3	4	5	N	13
10.	Promote safety of students related to school bus operation	1	2	3	4	5	N	14
11.	Participate in meetings of board committees	1	2	3	4	5	N	15

	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE 1 = VERY HIGH 2 = HIGH 3 = MODERATE 4 = LOW 5 = VERY LOW N = SHOULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED	*Please do not write in this column*
12. Establish channels of communication among superintendent, parents and other community members	1 2 3 4 5 N	16
13. Coordinate teacher evaluations	1 2 3 4 5 N	17
14. Participate in the evaluation of teachers	1 2 3 4 5 N	18
15. Monitor programs concerning operation and maintenance of school buildings	1 2 3 4 5 N	19
16. Coordinate development of policy	1 2 3 4 5 N	20
17. Ensure availability of instructional materials	1 2 3 4 5 N	21
18. Provide opportunities for teacher inservice	1 2 3 4 5 N	22
19. Make final recommendations regarding student suspensions and expulsions	1 2 3 4 5 N	23
20. Promote time efficiency in bus transportation	1 2 3 4 5 N	24
21. Develop board meeting agendas	1 2 3 4 5 N	25
22. Establish channels of communication with members of the teaching staff	1 2 3 4 5 N	26
23. Participate in evaluation of programs	1 2 3 4 5 N	27
24. Monitor the designing of school buildings	1 2 3 4 5 N	28
25. Coordinate implementation of policy	1 2 3 4 5 N	29

	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE 1 = VERY HIGH 2 = HIGH 3 = MODERATE 4 = LOW 5 = VERY LOW N = SHOULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED						*Please do not write in this column*
26. Coordinate implementation of a new or revised curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	N	30
27. Recommend teachers for permanent certification, re-employment, tenure, promotion or dismissal	1	2	3	4	5	N	31
28. Ensure that pupil personnel records are kept up to date	1	2	3	4	5	N	32
29. Participate in professional development activities with trustees	1	2	3	4	5	N	33
30. Establish channels of communication with trustees	1	2	3	4	5	N	34
31. Participate in the evaluation of schools	1	2	3	4	5	N	35
32. Write proposals, briefs, and reports on behalf of the school system	1	2	3	4	5	N	36
33. Monitor the requisition and purchase of equipment and furnishings	1	2	3	4	5	N	37
34. Coordinate the evaluation of school system policies	1	2	3	4	5	N	38
35. Plan for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system	1	2	3	4	5	N	39
36. Provide for orientation of new members of the teaching staff	1	2	3	4	5	N	40
37. Promote the school system in the community	1	2	3	4	5	N	41
38. Participate in school system evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	N	42

		LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE 1 = VERY HIGH 2 = HIGH 3 = MODERATE 4 = LOW 5 = VERY LOW N = SHOULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED	*Please do not write in this column*
39.	Support board policies in public	1 2 3 4 5 N	43
40.	Organize for pilot testing of new provincial programs in the school system	1 2 3 4 5 N	44
41.	Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplisments	1 2 3 4 5 N	45
42.	Enforce student attendance policy	1 2 3 4 5 N	46
43.	Participate in provincial education activities, for example, as a speaker or on evaluation teams	1 2 3 4 5 N	47
44.	Participate in principal evaluations	1 2 3 4 5 N	48
45.	Coordinate business procedures in the central office	1 2 3 4 5 N	49
46.	Coordinate development of the school system policy handbook	1 2 3 4 5 N	50
47.	Coordinate planning of student health services and programs	1 2 3 4 5 N	51
48.	Participate in professional associations	1 2 3 4 5 N	52
49.	Participate in the evaluation of the superintendent / self-evaluation	1 2 3 4 5 N	53
50.	Project student enrolments	1 2 3 4 5 N	54
51.	Develop long-range plans for the school system	1 2 3 4 5 N	55

	LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE 1 = VERY HIGH 2 = HIGH 3 = MODERATE 4 = LOW 5 = VERY LOW N = SHOULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED	*Please do not write in this column*
52. Participate in professional development activities with members of the teaching staff	1 2 3 4 5 N	56
53. Coordinate planning of diagnostic and evaluative services for students	1 2 3 4 5 N	57
54. Involve members of the teaching staff in school system decision-making	1 2 3 4 5 N	58
55. Establish channels of communication with local newspapers, radio and television	1 2 3 4 5 N	59
56. Involve Alberta Education personnel in school system decision-making	1 2 3 4 5 N	60
57. Organize personnel in order to accomplish education goals of the school system	1 2 3 4 5 N	61
58. Coordinate information-gathering in the school system	1 2 3 4 5 N	62

SECTION II SKILLS AND CHARACTERISTICS

This section is concerned with skills, and characteristics that are important in the work of a superintendent.

(Please fill in the blanks with numbers from page 7 that identify the most important skills and characteristics. For each question, list the three skills and three characteristics in order of importance -- most important as 1ST, second most important as 2ND, and third most important as 3RD.)

		SKILLS			CHARACTERISTICS			
		1ST	2ND	3RD	1ST	2ND	3RD	*Please do not use this column*
								1-4
1.	**What three skills and three characteristics are most important when a superintendent is ...**							
	(1) Working with trustees	—	—	—	—	—	—	5-16
	(2) Involved in public relations activities either within the school system or outside agencies	—	—	—	—	—	—	17-28
	(3) Developing board and provincial policies	—	—	—	—	—	—	29-40
	(4) Developing school programs	—	—	—	—	—	—	41-52
	(5) Managing certificated and non-certificated staff	—	—	—	—	—	—	53-64
	(6) Managing student services	—	—	—	—	—	—	65-76
	(7) Involved in evaluating students, programs, teachers, schools and/or a school system	—	—	—	—	—	—	5-16
	(8) Coordinating the management of central office and system administration, budgeting and accounting procedures	—	—	—	—	—	—	17-28
	(9) Coordinating the management of school system buildings and equipment	—	—	—	—	—	—	29-40
	(10) Coordinating the management of bus transportation programs	—	—	—	—	—	—	41-52
2.	**In general, what three skills and what three characteristics are most important in the work of a school superintendent?**	—	—	—	—	—	—	53-64

SKILLS	CHARACTERISTICS
1. Gather Information	19. Adaptable / Flexible
2. Analyze information / break information into separate parts	20. Well-groomed
3. Synthesize information	21. Ambitious
4. Interpret information	22. Trustworthy / Dependable / Sincere
5. Use theory / use new ideas and procedures	23. Approachable
6. Be sensitive to feelings and needs of others	24. Caring / Concerned
7. Listen to others	25. Persistent / Persevering
8. Relate to others	26. Stress tolerant
9. Learn from others	27. Confident
10. Resolve conflicts	28. Intuitive / Spontaneous / Instinctive
11. Take risks	29. Consistent / Fair
12. Influence others	30. Intelligent
13. Make decisions	31. Creative / Imaginative
14. Delegate responsibilities	32. Humorous / Witty
15. Organize	33. Enthusiastic
16. Speak clearly	
17. Write clearly	
18. Introduce changes	

SECTION III IMPORTANCE OF TASKS, SKILLS AND CHARACTERISTICS

In summary, what degree of importance do you assign to each of (1) TASKS, (2) SKILLS, AND (3) CHARACTERISTICS in determining the behavior of a superintendent.

Please do not write in this column

(Please circle a number for each question)

1 = VERY HIGH
2 = HIGH
3 = MODERATE
4 = LOW
5 = VERY LOW

(1)	**TASKS**	1	2	3	4	5	65
(2)	**SKILLS**	1	2	3	4	5	66
(3)	**CHARACTERISTICS**	1	2	3	4	5	67

SECTION IV BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Finally, we need some background information to help interpret the results.

(Please circle the appropriate answer to each of the following questions:)

Please do not write in this column.

1. What is your present position in education?

   (1) ALBERTA EDUCATION MANAGER
   (2) DEPUTY / ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
   (3) SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSON
   (4) SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
   (5) SUPERINTENDENT

   68

2. How long have you occupied your present position?

   (1) LESS THAN ONE YEAR
   (2) 1 TO 1.9 YEARS
   (3) 2 TO 2.9 YEARS
   (4) 3 TO 4.9 YEARS
   (5) 5 TO 9.9 YEARS
   (6) 10 TO 14.9 YEARS
   (7) 15 YEARS OR MORE

   69

3. How many years of experience have you had in positions requiring a teaching certificate?

   (1) NONE
   (2) 1 TO 1.9 YEARS
   (3) 2 TO 2.9 YEARS
   (4) 3 TO 4.9 YEARS
   (5) 5 TO 9.9 YEARS
   (6) 10 TO 14.9 YEARS
   (7) 15 YEARS OR MORE

   70

4. Which best describes the jurisdiction to which you are attached?

   (1) CITY DISTRICT
   (2) COUNTY
   (3) PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
   (4) SCHOOL DIVISION
   (5) SEVERAL DISTRICTS SHARING A SUPERINTENDENT
   (6) TOWN DISTRICT
   (7) OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)_____

   72

5. How many teachers does your jurisdiction employ?

   (1) FEWER THAN 50
   (2) 51 TO 100
   (3) 101 TO 200
   (4) 201 TO 500
   (5) 501 OR MORE
   (6) NOT APPLICABLE, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT MANAGER

   73

(Please Turn Page)

SECTION IV BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Finally, we need some background information to help interpret the results.

(Please circle the appropriate answer to each of the following questions:)

Please do not write in this column.

1. What is your present position in education?

(1) ALBERTA EDUCATION MANAGER
(2) DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT
(3) SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSON
(4) SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
(5) SUPERINTENDENT

68

2. How long have you occupied your present position?

(1) LESS THAN ONE YEAR
(2) 1 TO 1.9 YEARS
(3) 2 TO 2.9 YEARS
(4) 3 TO 4.9 YEARS
(5) 5 TO 9.9 YEARS
(6) 10 TO 14.9 YEARS
(7) 15 YEARS OR MORE

69

3. How many years experience have you had as a school trustee?

(1) NONE
(2) LESS THAN ONE YEAR
(3) 2 TO 2.9 YEARS
(4) 3 TO 5.9 YEARS
(5) 6 TO 8.9 YEARS
(6) 9 TO 14.9 YEARS
(7) 15 YEARS OR MORE

70

4. Which best describes the jurisdiction to which you are attached?

(1) CITY DISTRICT
(2) COUNTY
(3) PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
(4) SCHOOL DIVISION
(5) SEVERAL DISTRICTS SHARING A SUPERINTENDENT
(6) TOWN DISTRICT
(7) OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)_____

71

5. How many teachers does your jurisdiction employ?

(1) FEWER THAN 50
(2) 51 TO 100
(3) 101 TO 200
(4) 201 TO 500
(5) 501 OR MORE
(6) NOT APPLICABLE, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT MANAGER

72

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the school superintendents in Alberta? If so, please use this space for that purpose.

Also, interviews will be conducted with a sample of respondents and we are interested in your opinions regarding what issues should be addressed at the interviews.

Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided to:

School Superintendent Study
Department of Educational Administration
University of Alberta
7-104 Education Building North
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2G5

Your contribution to this effort is very greatly appreciated. If you would like a summary of results, please print your name and address on the back of the return envelope (NOT in this questionnaire). We will see that you get it.

APPENDIX B

COVERING LETTERS AND POSTCARD

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241

April 2, 1986

Dear _____,

An extensive study of Alberta superintendents was conducted by Downey in 1976. Many changes have occurred in the past ten years, so that this study was planned to update and extend the previous research. The study will examine how important various tasks, skills, and characteristics are to the work of school superintendents.

Your participation is requested in this School Superintendent Study. Approximately 750 respondents, including superintendents, deputy superintendents, school board chairpersons, principals, and Alberta Education managers, are being asked to give their opinions. In order that the results will truly represent the thinking of these respondent groups, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. This questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check off your name on the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

The results of this research will be made available to study participants. You may receive a summary of results by printing your name and address on the back of the return envelope. Please do not put this information on the questionnaire itself.

I would be most happy to answer any questions you might have. Please write or call the School Superintendent Study at 432-3094.

Thank you for your assistance in this doctoral research.

Yours sincerely,

Wilf Green

Wilf Green
Researcher

WG
Encl.

Covering Letter for the School Superintendent Study

April 9, 1986

Last week a questionnaire seeking your opinions about tasks, skills, and characteristics of school superintendents was mailed to you.

If you have already completed and returned it to us, please accept our thanks. If not, please do so today. Your views are extremely important to the School Superintendent Study. You are assisting to make results accurately reflect the opinions of educational leaders in Alberta.

If by some chance, you did not receive the questionnaire or it got misplaced, please call me right now, collect (432-2171) and I will get another one in the mail to you today.

Yours sincerely,

Wilf Green
Researcher

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241

April 30, 1986

Dear _____,

Earlier this month, I wrote to you seeking your opinion about school superintendents. As of today we have not yet received your completed questionnaire.

This study was undertaken to examine how important various tasks, skills, and characteristics are to the work of school superintendents.

I am writing to you again because of the significance each questionnaire has to the usefulness of the study. In order for the results of this study to be truly representative of the opinions of Alberta school board chairmen, superintendents, deputy superintendents, principals, and Department of Education managers, it is essential that each person in the sample return their questionnaire.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed.

Your contribution to the success of the School Superintendent Study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Wilf Green
Researcher

WG
Encl.

Second Follow-up Covering Letter

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT STUDY: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION

THANK YOU FOR CONSENTING TO BE INTERVIEWED.

BEFORE WE BEGIN, I WANT TO MENTION MY PURPOSE FOR TALKING TO YOU. I AM CONDUCTING A STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPORTANCE OF TASKS, SKILLS AND CHARACTERISTICS IN THE WORK OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS, AND FURTHER, HOW THE ENVIRONMENT AFFECTS THE WORK OF SUPERINTENDENTS. PART OF THE INFORMATION IS BEING COLLECTED BY THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT QUESTIONNAIRE, AND ANOTHER PART OF INFORMATION IS BEING GATHERED THROUGH INTERVIEWS WITH A SMALL NUMBER OF SUPERINTENDENTS, DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENTS, BOARD CHAIRMEN, PRINCIPALS AND ALBERTA EDUCATION MANAGERS. IN THE INTERVIEWS, I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FURTHER INSIGHTS REGARDING ISSUES AFFECTING THE WORK OF SUPERINTENDENTS.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OBJECTIONS IF I USE A TAPE RECORDER? THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE WILL BE KEPT IN STRICT CONFIDENCE. I WILL NOT RECORD YOUR NAME, ONLY THAT I AM TALKING TO A _____. I CAN TURN OFF THE TAPE RECORDER, IF YOU DO NOT WANT SOMETHING TAPED.

GENERAL QUESTION

WHAT MAKES A SUPERINTENDENT A GOOD SUPERINTENDENT?

SITUATION

HOW DOES THE SITUATION A SUPERINTENDENT IS IN AFFECT HIS WORK?
How does the type of school jurisdiction, whether county, school division or district affect the job of a superintendent?
Are there rural/urban differences?
What does the size of the school system do to the job of the superintendent?
How does the size of central office staff affect a superintendent?
What about a superintendent working with a number of small districts?
How do resources affect a superintendent?

PEOPLE

HOW DO DIFFERENT PEOPLE AFFECT THE WORK OF A SUPERINTENDENT?
More specifically, how do trustees affect the work of a superintendent?
Deputy/assistant superintendents?
School administrators?
Alberta Education personnel?

POLITICS

IN WHAT WAYS IS THE SUPERINTENDENCY A POLITICAL POSITION?
Have there been any changes in recent years?
What have been some recent changes?

TASKS, SKILLS AND CHARACTERISTICS

IN TERMS OF TASKS, SKILLS AND CHARACTERISTICS, HOW HAS THE POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT CHANGED IN RECENT YEARS?
Why are some tasks more important than others?
What do you consider to be the most important tasks?
What has happened to the number of tasks performed by superintendents?

How do superintendents develop personal characteristics?
Are there some characteristics that you consider to be more important than others?

How do superintendents learn skills?
What skills do you think are most important?

How does a superintendent provide educational leadership today?

LOCAL APPOINTMENTS

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS CONCERNING LOCALLY APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENTS?

FUTURE

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS IN ALBERTA?
Do you favor superintendent certification? Why?
Term appointments?
Importance of a career path for superintendents?

APPENDIX D

RANKING OF TASKS

Table 4

Levels of Importance of Tasks as Rated by the Sample of Alberta Education Managers, Deputy Superintendents, Board Chairmen, Principals and Superintendents

n=534

Rank	Task Area	Task	Mean
1	Working With Trustees	Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.85
2	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.71
3	Policy Development	Identify priorities for policy development	4.68
4	Policy Development	Support board policies in public	4.68
5	Policy Development	Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.67
6	Policy Development	Coordinate development of policy	4.50
7	Public Relations	Promote the school system in the community	4.46
8	Evaluation	Participate in the evaluation of the superintendent (self-evaluation)	4.46
9	Evaluation	Participate in principal evaluations	4.45
10	Managing Staff	Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.43
11	Evaluation	Participate in school system evaluation	4.42
12	Managing Staff	Organize personnel in order to accomplish education goals of the school system	4.40
13	Business Management	Coordinate preparation of an annual budget	4.38
14	Policy Development	Coordinate the evaluation of school system policies	4.31

Table 4 (continued)

Rank	Task Area	Task	Mean
15	Policy Development	Coordinate implementation of policy	4.29
16	Business Management	Write proposals, briefs, and reports on behalf of the school system	4.29
17	School Facilities	Predict future building needs and trends	4.27
18	Evaluation	Participate in the evaluation of schools	4.22
19	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication among superintendent, parents and other community members	4.22
20	Evaluation	Coordinate teacher evaluations	4.18
21	Managing Staff	Recommend teachers for permanent certification, re-employment, tenure, promotion or dismissal	4.17
22	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication with members of the teaching staff	4.15
23	Policy Development	Coordinate development of the school system policy handbook	4.10
24	Evaluation	Monitor student achievement results	4.10
25	Managing Staff	Coordinate personnel recruitment	4.07
26	Developing School Programs	Monitor teacher awareness of and adherence to provincial programs of study	3.99
27	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication with local newspapers, radio and television	3.93
28	Evaluation	Participate in evaluation of programs	3.92
29	Working With Trustees	Participate in professional development activities with trustees	3.88

Table 4 (continued)

Rank	Task Area	Task	Mean
30	Working With Trustees	Develop board meeting agendas	3.88
31	Public Relations	Participate in professional associations	3.83
32	Business Management	Involve members of the teaching staff in school system decision-making	3.82
33	Working With Trustees	Participate in meetings of committees	3.81
34	Managing Staff	Provide opportunities for teacher inservice	3.79
35	Developing School Programs	Coordinate implementation of new or revised curriculum	3.66
36	Business Management	Project student enrollments	3.62
37	Managing Staff	Participate in professional development activities with members of the teaching staff	3.61
38	Business	Coordinate information-gathering in the school system	3.58
39	Evaluation	Participate in the evaluation of teachers	3.58
40	Student Services	Make recommendations regarding student suspensions and expulsions	3.52
41	Public Relations	Participate in provincial education activities, for example, as a speaker or on evaluation teams	3.47
42	Managing Staff	Provide for orientation of new members of the teaching staff	3.32
43	Developing School Programs	Ensure availability of instructional materials	3.29
44	School Facilities	Monitor the designing of school buildings	3.28
45	Developing School Programs	Organize for pilot testing of new provincial programs in the school system	3.18

Table 4 (continued)

Rank	Task Area	Task	Mean
46	School Facilities	Monitor programs concerning operation and maintenance of school buildings	3.03
47	Student Services	Coordinate planning of diagnostic and evaluative services for students	3.00
48	Student Services	Coordinate planning for student safety	2.91
49	Bus Transportation	Promote safety of students related to school bus operation	2.88
50	Managing Staff	Involve Alberta Education in school system decision-making	2.82
51	Public Relations	Establish channels of communication with students	2.70
52	Business Management	Coordinate business procedures in central office	2.65
53	Student Services	Enforce student attendance policy	2.59
54	Student Services	Ensure that pupil personnel records are kept up to date	2.54
55	School Facilities	Monitor the requisition and purchase of equipment and furnishings	2.44
56	Student Services	Coordinate planning of student health services and programs	2.31
57	Developing School Programs	Plan for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system	2.19
58	Bus Transportation	Promote time efficiency in bus transportation	2.18

APPENDIX E

POSITION COMPARISON OF TASKS IN EACH TASK AREA

Table 7

Levels of Importance of Tasks in Each Task Area with Respondents Grouped According to Position

TASK AREA and TASKS	Position Subgroup n = 534					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	1 Alta.Ed. n=26	2 Dep.Sup. n=83	3 Chair. n=104	4 Prin. n=223	5 Supt. n=98			
1. POLICY DEVELOPMENT								
Identify priorities for policy development	4.89	4.63	4.62	4.68	4.74	2.06	.0853	NS
Support board policies in public	4.79	4.82	4.63	4.57*	4.83	4.55	.0013	2-4, 4-5
Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.69	4.73	4.42	4.71	4.78	6.00	.0001	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Coordinate development of policy	4.62	4.42	4.19	4.35	4.33	1.33	.2577	NS
Coordinate the evaluation of school system policies	4.58	4.28	4.19	4.35	4.33	1.57	.1820	NS
Coordinate implementation of policy	4.50	4.19	4.39	4.21	4.41	2.64	.0333	NS
Coordinate development of the system policy handbook	4.35	4.17	4.02	4.02	4.23	1.74	.1389	NS
AVERAGES	4.63	4.46	4.38	4.44	4.55			
2. EVALUATION								
Participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self)	4.69	4.60	4.17	4.40	4.71	5.70	.0002	2-3, 3-5, 4-5
Participate in evaluation of principals	4.62	4.50	4.63	4.30	4.53	3.42	.0090	3-4
Participate in evaluation of school system	4.12	4.37	5.35	4.45	4.57	1.67	.1562	NS
Participate in evaluation of schools	4.00	4.23	4.33	4.15	4.32	1.24	.2938	NS
Coordinate teacher evaluations	4.35	4.20	4.60	3.94	4.26	7.97	.0000	3-4
Particpate in evaluation of programs	3.62	3.96	4.26	3.74	4.03	5.65	.0002	1-3, 3-4
Participate in evaluation of teachers	3.58	3.33	4.29	3.28	3.69	12.20	.0000	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
AVERAGES	4.14	4.17	4.38	4.04	4.30			

Table 7 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Position Subgroup n = 534					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	1 Alta.Ed. n=26	2 Dep.Sup n=83	3 Chair. n=104	4 Prin. n=223	5 Supt. n=98			
3. WORKING WITH TRUSTEES								
Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.88	4.90	4.71	4.84	4.93	4.08	.0030	2-3, 3-5
Participate in professional development with trustees	4.04	4.02	3.66	3.94	3.83	2.18	.0699	NS
Develop board meeting agendas	4.12	4.18	3.60	3.59	4.26	9.69	.0000	
Participate in meetings of board committees	4.04	3.77	3.64	3.80	4.00	1.86	.1216	NS
AVERAGES	4.27	4.22	3.90	4.05	4.26			
4. PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.81	4.73	4.53	4.74	4.81	3.57	.0070	3-4, 3-5
Promote the school system in the community	4.54	4.58	4.13	4.53	4.55	6.01	.0001	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Establish channels of communication among supt., parents and other community members	4.69	4.24	4.11	4.22	4.20	2.41	.0480	1-2
Establish channels of communication with members of the teaching staff	4.15	4.22	4.11	4.09	4.27	.74	.5567	NS
Establish channels of communication with local media	4.00	3.94	3.59	3.99	4.10	4.42	.0016	3-4, 3-5
Participate in professional associations	3.96	3.98	3.53	3.85	3.93	3.74	.0052	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Participate in provincial evaluation activities, for example, as a speaker or on evaluation teams	3.60	3.49	3.32	3.53	3.45	.88	.4745	NS
Establish channels of communication with students	3.04	2.66	3.12	2.53	2.61	4.83	.0008	3-4,3-5
AVERAGES	4.10	3.98	3.80	3.93	3.99			

Table 7 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Position Subgroup n = 534					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	1 Alta.Ed. n=26	2 Dep.Sup. n=83	3 Chair. n=104	4 Prin. n=223	5 Supt. n=98			
5. MANAGING STAFF								
Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.50	4.46	4.26	4.47	4.45	1.83	.1221	NS
Organize personnel in order to accomplish educational goals of the school system	4.54	4.45	4.28	4.38	4.52	1.71	.1459	NS
Recommend teachers for permanent certification, re-employment, promotion or dismissal	4.19	4.15	4.44	3.92	4.44	5.69	.0002	3-4, 4-5
Coordinate personnel recruitment	4.19	4.15	4.19	3.88	4.27	3.22	.0125	4-5
Provide opportunities for teacher inservice	3.58	3.77	3.80	3.79	3.86	.45	.7749	NS
Participate in professional development activities with members of the teaching staff	3.31	3.64	3.73	3.61	3.56	1.02	.3962	NS
Provide for orientation of new members of the teaching staff	3.50	3.46	3.25	3.19	3.53	1.99	.0942	NS
Involve Alberta Education personnel in school system decision making	3.00	2.64	2.58	2.91	2.96	2.01	.0914	NS
AVERAGES	3.85	3.84	3.82	3.77	3.95			
6. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT								
Coordinate preparation of an annual budget	4.50	4.56	4.09	4.39	4.46	3.80	.0047	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Write proposals, briefs and reports on behalf of the school system	4.00	4.32	4.14	4.36	4.34	2.10	.0791	NS
Involve members of the teaching staff in school system decision-making	3.92	3.82	3.52	3.90	3.91	2.90	.0214	3-4
Project student enrollment	3.46	3.74	3.70	3.41	3.97	4.35	.0018	4-5
Coordinate information-gathering in the system	3.62	3.68	3.47	3.52	3.72	1.18	.3172	NS
Coordinate business procedures in central office	2.69	2.44	2.73	2.80	2.56	1.72	.1432	NS
AVERAGES	3.70	3.76	3.61	3.73	3.83			

Table 7 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Position Subgroup n = 534					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	1 Alta.Ed. n=26	2 Dep.Sup. n=83	3 Chair. n=104	4 Prin. n=223	5 Supt. n=98			
7. SCHOOL PROGRAMS								
Monitor teacher awareness of and adherence to provincial programs of study	4.12	4.07	4.41	3.69	4.09	9.42	.0000	2-4, 3-4, 4-5
Coordinate implementation of new or revised curriculum	3.62	3.53	4.11	3.57	3.54	6.15	.0001	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Ensure availability of instructional materials	3.42	3.35	3.34	3.22	3.32	.4280	.7889	NS
Organize for pilot testing of new provincial programs in the school system	3.08	2.93	3.56	3.16	3.06	4.87	.0007	2-3, 3-4, 3-5
Plan for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system	2.38	2.15	2.25	2.04	2.42	1.88	.1129	NS
AVERAGES	3.32	3.21	3.53	3.14	3.29			
8. SCHOOL FACILITIES								
Predict future building needs and repairs	4.35	4.31	4.10	4.33	4.24	1.54	.1881	NS
Monitor the designing of school buildings	3.42	3.38	3.33	3.09	3.59	3.69	.0056	4-5
Monitor programs concerning operation and maintenance of school buildings	3.04	2.91	3.00	3.06	3.06	.31	.8736	NS
Monitor the requisition and purchase of equipment and furnishings	2.50	2.55	2.38	2.31	2.68	2.03	.0888	NS
AVERAGES	3.33	3.29	3.20	3.20	3.40			

Table 7 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Position Subgroup n = 534					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	1 Alta.Ed. n=26	2 Dep.Sup n=83	3 Chair. n=104	4 Prin. n=223	5 Supt. n=98			
9. STUDENT SERVICES								
Make final recommendations regarding student suspensions and expulsions	3.92	3.47	3.64	3.46	3.45	1.10	.3561	NS
Coordinate planning of diagnostic and evaluation services for students	3.15	2.81	3.31	2.93	2.88	2.65	.0328	NS
Coordinate planning for student safety	2.92	3.05	3.21	2.65	3.05	5.55	.0002	3-4, 4-5
Enforce student attendance policy	2.62	2.39	2.56	2.66	2.62	.64	.6529	NS
Ensure that pupil personnel records are kept up to date	2.92	2.85	2.48	2.30	2.78	4.46	.0015	2-4, 4-5
Coordinate planning of student health services and programs	2.54	2.19	2.37	2.23	2.46	1.17	.3246	NS
AVERAGES	3.01	2.81	2.93	2.71	2.87			
10. BUS TRANSPORTATION								
Promote safety of students related to school bus operation	3.54	3.10	2.85	2.65	3.06	4.98	.0006	1-4, 2-4
Promote time efficiency in bus transportation	2.58	2.21	2.05	2.13	2.29	1.19	.3151	NS
AVERAGES	3.06	2.65	2.45	2.39	2.67			

*Significant low averages underlined

APPENDIX F

SIZE OF SCHOOL JURISDICTION COMPARISON OF TASKS IN EACH TASK AREA

Table 10

Levels of Importance of Tasks in Each Task Area with Respondents Grouped According to Size of School Jurisdiction

TASK AREA and TASKS	Size of School Jurisdiction n = 504					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) Very Small n=71	(2) Small n=92	(3) Medium n=154	(4) Large n=82	(5) Very Large n=105			
1. POLICY DEVELOPMENT								
Identify priorities for policy development	4.58	4.68	4.63	4.77	4.74	2.07	.0832	NS
Support board policies in public	4.55*	4.68	4.62	4.87	4.68	2.88	.0225	1-4, 3-4
Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.42	4.62	4.64	4.81	4.81	6.15	.0001	1-4, 1-5
Coordinate development of policy	4.44	4.58	4.45	4.51	4.53	.80	.5268	NS
Coordinate the evaluation of school system policies	4.23	[illegible]	4.25	4.38	4.30	1.12	.3460	NS
Coordinate implementation of policy	4.38	4.47	4.19	4.34	4.18	2.80	.0253	NS
Coordinate development of the system policy handbook	4.15	4.39	4.14	4.17	3.67	8.75	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
AVERAGES	4.39	4.55	4.42	4.55	4.42			
2. EVALUATION								
Participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self)	4.39	4.36	4.39	4.46	4.65	1.63	.1645	NS
Participate in evaluation of principals	4.61	4.73	4.53	4.72	3.75	29.67	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Participate in evaluation of school system	4.35	4.47	4.44	4.50	4.43	.29	.8829	NS
Participate in evaluation of schools	4.55	4.37	4.38	4.50	3.50	25.51	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Coordinate teacher evaluations	4.65	4.47	4.32	4.20	3.35	27.65	.0000	1-4, 1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Participate in evaluation of programs	4.42	4.24	4.04	4.00	3.17	26.34	.0000	1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Participate in evaluation of teachers	4.27	4.21	3.90	3.44	2.15	64.82	.0000	1-4, 1-5, 2-4, 2-5, 3-4, 3-5, 4-5
AVERAGES	4.46	4.41	4.28	4.26	3.57			

Table 10 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Size of School Jurisdiction n = 504					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) Very Small n=71	(2) Small n=92	(3) Medium n=154	(4) Large n=82	(5) Very Large n=105			
3. WORKING WITH TRUSTEES								
Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.70	4.85	4.86	4.93	4.86	2.83	.0242	1-4
Participate in professional development with trustees	3.63	3.82	3.88	3.80	4.15	3.48	.0081	1-5
Develop board meeting agendas	3.45	3.83	3.80	4.34	3.67	6.66	.0000	1-4, 2-4, 3-4, 4-5
Participate in meetings of board committees	3.45	3.85	3.96	3.83	3.71	3.10	.0155	1-3
AVERAGES	3.81	4.08	4.12	4.23	4.10			
4. PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.52	4.71	4.70	4.79	4.80	2.88	.0223	1-4, 1-5
Promote the school system in the community	3.97	4.43	4.51	4.62	4.67	10.58	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
Establish channels of communication among supt., parents and other community members	4.07	4.14	4.08	4.37	4.35	2.77	.0266	NS
Establish channels of communication with members of the teaching staff	4.11	4.13	4.18	4.37	4.03	1.59	.1746	NS
Establish channels of communication with local media	3.39	3.93	3.90	4.07	4.17	7.85	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
Participate in professional associations	3.72	3.67	3.78	3.86	4.05	2.45	.0457	2-5
Participate in provincial evaluation activities, for example, as a speaker or on evaluation teams	3.38	3.36	3.36	3.41	3.78	3.26	.0117	2-5, 3-5
Establish channels of communication with students	2.85	2.74	2.49	2.63	2.83	1.67	.1548	NS
AVERAGES	3.75	3.89	3.88	4.02	4.08			

Table 10 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Size of School Jurisdiction n = 504					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) Very Small n=71	(2) Small n=92	(3) Medium n=154	(4) Large n=82	(5) Very Large n=105			
5. MANAGING STAFF								
Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.18	4.52	4.48	4.51	4.36	3.30	.0110	1-2, 1-3, 1-4
Organize personnel in order to accomplish educational goals of the school system	4.23	4.39	4.36	4.51	4.50	2.11	.0785	NS
Recommend teachers for permanent certification, re-employment, promotion or dismissal	4.72	4.61	4.42	4.07	3.11	42.83	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5, 1-4, 2-4, 3-4
Coordinate personnel recruitment	4.28	4.41	4.29	4.07	3.23	25.74	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Provide opportunities for teacher inservice	3.93	4.03	3.89	3.87	3.34	8.40	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Paricipate in professional development activities with members of the teaching staff	3.76	3.72	3.65	3.67	3.41	1.74	.1393	NS
Provide for orientation of new members of the teaching staff	3.42	3.35	3.42	3.55	2.88	4.67	.0010	1-5, 3-5, 4-5
Involve Alberta Education personnel in school system decision-making	3.01	2.93	2.72	2.52	2.89	2.03	.0886	NS
AVERAGES	3.94	4.00	3.90	3.85	3.47			
6. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT								
Coordinate preparation of an annual budget	4.11	4.26	4.41	4.65	4.36	3.58	.0068	1-4
Write proposals, briefs and reports on behalf of the school system	4.24	4.32	4.34	4.41	4.18	1.07	.3715	NS
Involve members of the teaching staff in school system decision-making	3.52	3.87	3.72	4.00	3.95	3.11	.0152	1-4
Project student enrollment	3.62	3.92	4.00	3.57	2.88	17.58	.0000	1-4, 1-5, 2-4, 2-5, 3-4, 3-5
Coordinate information-gathering in the system	3.42	3.66	3.60	3.77	3.38	2.22	.0656	NS
Coordinate business procedures in central office	2.80	2.85	2.65	2.59	2.58	.68	.6777	NS
AVERAGES	3.62	3.81	3.79	3.83	3.55			

Table 10 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Size of School Jurisdiction n = 504					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) Very Small n=71	(2) Small n=92	(3) Medium n=154	(4) Large n=82	(5) Very Large n=105			
7. SCHOOL PROGRAMS								
Monitor teacher awareness of and adherence to provincial programs of study	4.35	4.34	4.01	4.00	3.36	15.25	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Coordinate implementation of new or revised curriculum	4.10	4.02	3.60	3.64	3.14	13.70	.0000	1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 2-3, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Ensure availability of instructional materials	3.23	3.40	3.32	3.49	3.01	2.35	.0535	NS
Organize for pilot testing of new provincial programs in the school system	3.48	3.37	3.11	3.10	2.99	3.23	.0124	1-5
Plan for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system	2.23	2.30	2.32	2.13	1.84	2.80	.0256	3-5
AVERAGES	3.48	3.49	3.27	3.27	2.87			
8. SCHOOL FACILITIES								
Predict future building needs and repairs	4.14	4.26	4.38	4.46	4.01	4.48	.0014	3-5, 4-5
Monitor the designing of school buildings	3.58	3.27	3.37	3.45	2.83	5.99	.0001	1-5, 3-5, 4-5
Monitor programs concerning operation and maintenance of school buildings	3.25	3.17	3.05	3.10	2.63	4.52	.0014	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Monitor the requisition and purchase of equipment and furnishings	2.61	2.47	2.49	2.65	2.02	4.42	.0016	1-5, 3-5, 4-5
AVERAGES	3.39	3.29	3.32	3.41	2.87			

Table 10 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Size of School Jurisdiction n = 504					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) Very Small n=71	(2) Small n=92	(3) Medium n=154	(4) Large n=82	(5) Very Large n=105			
9. STUDENT SERVICES								
Make final recommendations regarding student suspensions and expulsions	3.52	3.58	3.50	3.67	3.31	.95	.4331	NS
Coordinate planning of diagnostic and evaluation services for students	3.41	3.08	3.05	3.02	2.53	6.80	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Coordinate planning for student safety	3.04	2.99	3.06	3.10	2.37	7.81	.0000	1-5, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Enforce student attendance policy	2.69	2.80	2.62	2.76	2.12	4.25	.0022	2-5, 3-5, 4-5
Ensure that pupil personnel records are kept up to date	2.76	2.47	2.62	2.67	2.15	3.09	.0158	1-5
Coordinate planning of student health services and programs	2.70	2.02	2.41	2.45	1.99	6.24	.0001	1-2, 1-5, 3-5
AVERAGES	3.02	2.82	2.88	2.94	2.90			
10. BUS TRANSPORTATION								
Promote safety of students related to school bus operation	2.80	2.91	3.01	3.00	2.46	3.50	.0078	3-5, 4-5
Promote time efficiency in bus transportation	2.10	2.23	2.16	2.28	2.04	.53	.7164	NS
AVERAGES	2.45	2.57	2.58	2.64	2.25			

*Significant low averages underlined

APPENDIX G

TYPE OF SCHOOL JURISDICTION COMPARISON OF TASKS IN EACH TASK AREA

Table 13

Levels of Importance of Tasks in Each Task Area with Respondents Grouped According to Type of School Jurisdiction

TASK AREA and TASKS	Type of School Jurisdiction n = 491					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) City n=160	(2) County n=129	(3) Div. n=127	(4) Sev. Dist n=38	(5) Town n=37			
1. POLICY DEVELOPMENT								
Identify priorities for policy development	4.71	4.71	4.69	4.45*	4.62	2.67	.0213	NS
Support board policies in public	4.76	4.55	4.73	4.55	4.645	2.28	.0459	NS
Develop long-range plans for the school system	4.81	4.61	4.72	4.26	4.59	6.35	.0000	1-4, 2-4, 3-4
Coordinate development of policy	4.58	4.50	4.42	4.34	4.46	1.55	.1726	NS
Coordinate the evaluation of school system policies	4.35	4.32	4.24	4.21	4.30	1.07	.3743	NS
Coordinate implementation of policy	4.33	4.26	4.24	4.26	4.30	.64	.6682	NS
Coordinate development of the system policy handbook	3.87	4.27	4.14	4.24	4.08	3.61	.0032	1-2
AVERAGES	4.49	4.46	4.45	4.33	4.43			
2. EVALUATION								
Participate in evaluation of the superintendent (self)	4.60	4.24	4.45	4.39	4.27	2.36	.0392	NS
Participate in evaluation of principals	4.15	4.59	4.56	4.66	4.57	6.42	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4
Participate in evaluation of school system	4.51	4.48	4.39	4.34	4.24	1.36	.2395	NS
Participate in evaluation of schools	3.93	4.39	4.33	4.39	4.54	6.06	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-5
Coordinate teacher evaluations	3.70	4.37	4.32	4.61	4.59	12.25	.0000	1-2, 1-3 1-4, 1-5
Particpate in evaluation of programs	3.57	4.04	4.05	4.37	4.41	8.51	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
Participate in evaluation of teachers	2.64	3.91	3.92	4.34	4.32	31.81	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
AVERAGES	3.87	4.30	4.29	4.44	4.42			

Table 13 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Type of School Jurisdiction n = 491					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) City n=160	(2) County n=129	(3) Div. n=127	(4) Sev. Dist n=38	(5) Town n=37			
3. WORKING WITH TRUSTEES								
Participate in meetings that involve the entire board	4.93	4.85	4.82	4.66	4.78	3.06	.0100	1-4
Participate in professional development with trustees	4.11	3.77	3.90	3.71	3.49	3.71	.0026	1-5
Develop board meeting agendas	3.97	3.77	3.87	3.45	3.68	1.86	.1001	NS
Participate in meetings of board committees	3.94	3.88	3.76	3.39	3.51	2.76	.0179	NS
AVERAGES	4.24	4.07	4.09	3.80	3.86			
4. PUBLIC RELATIONS								
Establish channels of communication with trustees	4.81	4.64	4.77	4.50	4.65	3.12	.0087	1-4
Promote the school system in the community	4.67	4.47	4.50	3.95	4.49	7.31	.0000	1-4, 1-5, 2-4, 3-4
Establish channels of communication among supt., parents and other community members	4.37	4.05	4.21	3.87	4.25	5.03	.0002	1-2, 1-4
Establish channels of communication with members of the teaching staff	4.18	4.18	4.25	4.05	3.86	1.14	.3383	NS
Establish channels of communication with local media	4.15	3.89	3.91	3.39	3.62	4.96	.0002	1-4
Participate in professional associations	3.97	3.74	3.75	3.74	3.78	1.34	.2449	NS
Participate in provincial evaluation activities, for example, as a speaker or on evaluation teams	3.70	3.29	3.44	3.34	3.27	3.09	.0093	1-2
Establish channels of communication with students	2.88	2.56	2.53	2.79	2.54	2.04	.0715	NS
AVERAGES	4.09	3.85	3.92	3.70	3.81			

Table 13 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Type of School Jurisdiction n = 491					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) City n=160	(2) County n=129	(3) Div. n=127	(4) Sev. Dist n=38	(5) Town n=37			
5. MANAGING STAFF								
Recognize and praise personnel for worthwhile accomplishments	4.48	4.43	4.50	4.21	4.14	2.49	.0305	NS
Organize personnel in order to accomplish educational goals of the school system	4.48	4.43	4.39	4.21	4.24	1.45	.2054	NS
Recommend teachers for permanent certification, re-employment, promotion or dismissal	3.60	4.32	4.42	4.63	4.70	13.57	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
Coordinate personnel recruitment	3.59	4.31	4.23	4.47	4.32	12.10	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
Provide opportunities for teacher inservice	3.53	4.04	3.83	3.89	4.03	7.84	.0002	1-2
Paricipate in professional development activities with members of the teaching staff	3.56	3.64	3.62	3.87	3.70	1.11	.3534	NS
Provide for orientation of new members of the teaching staff	3.13	3.38	3.42	3.47	3.41	1.36	.2362	NS
Involve Alberta Education personnel in school system decision-making	2.84	2.56	2.87	2.92	2.945	1.33	.2512	NS
AVERAGES	3.65	3.89	3.91	3.96	3.94			
6. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT								
Coordinate preparation of an annual budget	4.42	4.54	4.35	4.05	4.32	1.94	.0861	NS
Write proposals, briefs and reports on behalf of the school system	4.33	4.29	4.30	4.34	4.30	.70	.6218	NS
Involve members of the teaching staff in school system decision-making	4.01	3.86	3.67	3.58	3.62	2.56	.0266	NS
Project student enrollment	3.27	3.78	3.87	3.63	3.92	5.09	.0001	1-2, 1-3, 1-5
Coordinate information-gathering in the system	3.54	3.66	3.55	3.37	3.76	.74	.5932	NS
Coordinate business procedures in central office	2.63	2.75	2.63	2.78	2.89	.77	.5719	NS
AVERAGES	3.70	3.81	3.73	3.63	3.80			

Table 13 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Type of School Jurisdiction n = 491					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) City n=160	(2) County n=129	(3) Div. n=127	(4) Sev. Dist n=38	(5) Town n=37			
7. SCHOOL PROGRAMS								
Monitor teacher awareness of and adherence to provincial programs of study	3.65	4.13	4.02	4.50	4.22	6.11	.0000	1-5
Coordinate implementation of new or revised curriculum	3.32	3.80	3.70	4.21	4.00	7.13	.0000	1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5
Ensure availability of instructional materials	3.21	3.42	3.22	3.13	3.73	1.74	.1229	NS
Organize for pilot testing of new provincial programs in the school system	3.05	3.36	3.07	3.34	3.29	1.76	.1198	NS
Plan for organization of equipment, books and audio-visual materials in the school system	2.00	2.28	2.23	2.11	2.59	1.91	.0910	NS
AVERAGES	3.05	3.40	3.25	3.46	3.57			
8. SCHOOL FACILITIES								
Predict future building needs and repairs	4.25	4.34	4.30	4.05	4.30	.80	.5486	NS
Monitor the designing of school buildings	3.16	3.38	3.27	3.48	3.41	.89	.4923	NS
Monitor programs concerning operation and maintenance of school buildings	2.86	3.14	3.09	2.92	3.14	1.27	.2767	NS
Monitor the requisition and purchase of equipment and furnishings	2.23	2.65	2.49	2.34	2.59	2.06	.0692	NS
AVERAGES	3.12	3.38	3.29	3.20	3.36			

Table 13 (continued)

TASK AREA and TASKS	Type of School Jurisdiction n = 401					F Ratio	F Prob.	Significance Between Groups
	(1) City n=160	(2) County n=129	(3) Div. n=127	(4) Sev. Dist n=38	(5) Town n=37			
9. STUDENT SERVICES								
Make final recommendations regarding student suspensions and expulsions	3.51	3.42	3.54	3.45	3.70	.84	.5216	NS
Coordinate planning of diagnostic and evaluation services for students	2.76	3.13	2.94	3.37	3.27	3.00	.0111	NS
Coordinate planning for student safety	2.64	3.13	2.95	2.97	3.00	2.82	.0159	1-2
Enforce student attendance policy	2.39	2.64	2.75	2.53	2.90	1.50	.1875	NS
Ensure that pupil personnel records are kept up to date	2.41	2.47	2.57	2.71	2.92	1.56	.1688	NS
Coordinate planning of student health services and programs	2.18	2.25	2.28	2.42	2.86	2.43	.0340	1-6
AVERAGES	2.21	2.84	2.84	2.91	3.11			
10. BUS TRANSPORTATION								
Promote safety of students related to school bus operation	2.56	2.21	2.89	2.61	2.92	5.86	.0000	1-2
Promote time efficiency in bus transportation	2.06	2.32	2.20	1.95	2.32	1.49	.1906	NS
AVERAGES	2.31	2.77	2.55	2.28	2.62			

*Significant low averages underlined

VITA

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PLACE OF BIRTH: Calgary, Alberta

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1944

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: University of Alberta-- B.Ed. in Elementary Science, M.Ed. in Educational Administration

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE: Two years as Vice-Principal, three years as Principal, thirteen years as Superintendent of Schools